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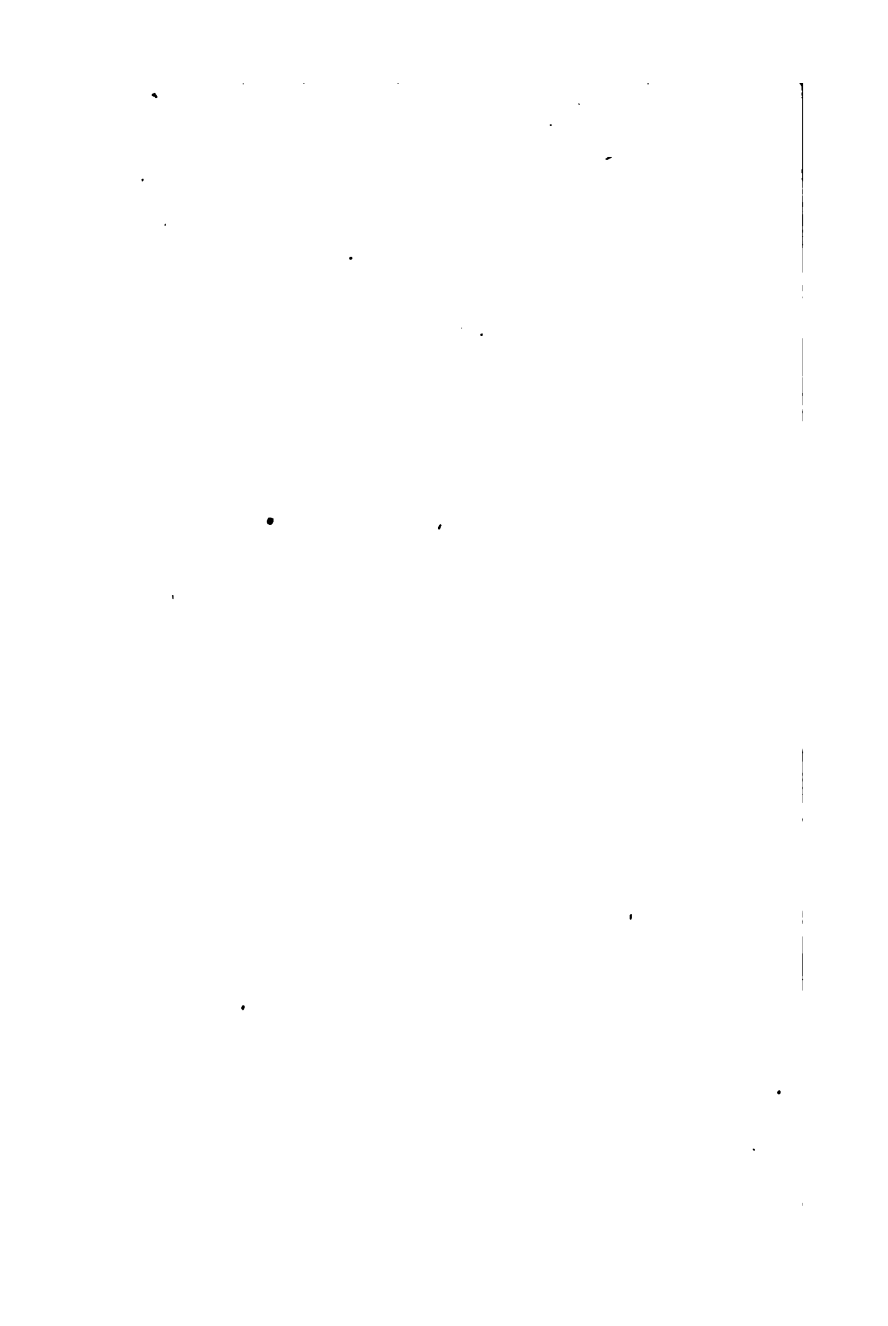
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E. F. Newhall

From his cousin

Daniel C. Abbott

Jan. 14. 1849.



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THE

PERSECUTED FAMILY;

A NARRATIVE

OF THE

SUFFERINGS OF THE COVENANTERS

IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES II.

BY ROBERT POLLOK, A.M.,

AUTHOR OF "THE COURSE OF TIME, A POEM," "HELEN OF
THE GLEN," ETC.

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PREFACE.

THE lives and memories of our Christian ancestors, who suffered so much for the blessings of that civil and religious liberty, which the inhabitants of Britain now enjoy, ought, one would think, to be peculiarly interesting and sacred to us their posterity. Yet so it happens, that while the warrior, who has drained his own country of its wealth, and emptied it of its bravest people, to carry devastation and ruin over other nations, attracts the historic pen minutely to record his deeds, and the genius of poetry, in lofty verse, to sing his praise,—those glorious sufferers, who exposed themselves to the fury of persecution, and like the true soldiers of Jesus Christ, patient, persevering, and zealous, fought in behalf of all that is dear to man, are wholly forgotten by many,—their characters ridiculed, and their actions misrepresented, by others,—and the courage with which they suffered for our good too little admired by all. The patriot, who takes the sword in his hand, and, at the head of his countrymen, makes extraordinary efforts to repel the invasion of an enemy, or to shake the guilty despot from the

strongholds of his tyranny, becomes, as he deserves, the subject of warmest eulogy; and there is not a passage in his history which the young and old of his country cannot relate. But if the patriot, who has saved his country from an enemy, or rid it of oppression, is worthy of his laurels, is he less worthy, who abandons the comforts of plenty, submits to every privation, and offers himself to every trial, that he may do his duty to God where he lives, and hand down religion in its purity to after generations? With more pomp, indeed, are the steps of the patriot soldier attended; but the sufferings of the persecuted Christian bring more glory to God, and more good to man. The one fights, that he may secure our possessions from plunder, and our bodies from slavery: the other suffers, that he may preserve for us an inheritance which fadeth not away,—a peace which passeth understanding,—a liberty which is spiritual,—and a life which is eternal. The one fights for the reputation of his country, and our rights as men: the other suffers for the glory of God, and our privileges as immortal beings. Every sigh, we know, of our persecuted ancestors is recorded in heaven; every tear which they shed is preserved in the bottle of God. Why, then, should their memories not be dear to us, for whom they bled, and for whom they died?

But it is not only that we may pay them our debt of gratitude that we ought to acquaint ourselves

with their lives: it is, that we may gather humility from their lowliness; faith from their trust in God; courage from their heaven-sustained fortitude; warmth from the flame of their devotion, and hope from their glorious success. In this age of peace to the church, the love of many hath waxed cold. Because God requires less hard service of us than he did of our forefathers, we seem to grudge the performance of it. To rekindle the dying embers of zeal, and warm the heart of coldness, we know nothing better than to peruse the lives of those who suffered so much, and with such willingness of heart, for those religious privileges which we now enjoy in peace and security.—Youth, especially, have need to make themselves well acquainted with their lives; for they can scarcely fail to meet with books in which heedless genius has held them forth to laughter; and if they are not taught to revere them, they will soon be taught to hold them in ridicule. Many of their lives, however, are either written in so antiquated and ungainly a phraseology, as to be nowise inviting to the youthful mind; or are blended with circumstances so extraordinary, as to discredit and destroy the effect of what is true. It is a belief of this which has induced me to lay before the public the following narrative, the different parts of which, although I do not pretend to say they happened in the very same relation which I have

given them, are all severally true, and such as require no credence in those miracles which have so hurt and discredited the character and actions of our persecuted ancestors.

THE
PERSECUTED FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

There stands the Messenger of truth : there stands
The legate of the skies ! His theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.
In doctrine uncorrupt ; in language plain,
And plain in manner ; decent, solemn, chaste
And natural in gesture ; much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too. Affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.

COWPER.

THE Reverend Mr. JAMES BRUCE, the head of that family whose lives we are briefly to record, was the youngest son of a very respectable gentleman in the upper district of Lanarkshire. In his boyhood he gave such indications of superior talent, and love of piety and learning, as induced his father to educate him for the ministry. During the

course of his studies in the University of Glasgow, James applied himself to the various branches of education which were then taught, with an assiduity and success, which proved that his father was noways wrong in the profession he had chosen for his son. In divine literature, to which the pious bent of his mind, as well as his future views, directed him chiefly, his progress was extremely rapid, and his acquirements solid and extensive. Of controversial theology he was by no means ignorant; although his mild and peaceful mind delighted itself especially in contemplating the plain truths of the Bible, and how they might be impressed with the happiest effects on the souls of men. The New Testament he read continually; and his heart was warmed with its love, and his soul fashioned to its precepts. As his judgment was sound, so his feelings were strong. The history of our Saviour's life, and sufferings, and death, made a most extraordinary impression on his mind; and while he read, and loved, and adored, his soul took on the likeness of the great Testator, in the holy simplicity of his character, in resignation to the will of God, in devotion to the duties of religion, and in love to mankind. To those acquirements, without which a minister is ill fitted for his office, he added a pretty extensive knowledge

of philosophy and books of taste ; and withal he was not an unsuccessful student of the human heart.

The romantic scenery amidst which his childhood had been nursed, had strongly imaged on his mind the pure objects of nature ; and, following his own propensity, as well as imitating the writers of the Bible, he made ample use of them, in summoning them forth to bear witness to God's power, and wisdom, and goodness, and in illustrating by them the doctrines of the gospel.

With a mind thus prepared, in his twenty-sixth year, Mr. Bruce received a call from the inhabitants of S——— (a small village on the water of Ayr) and its neighbourhood to be their minister. The call, as every minister of sincere heart would wish, was cordial and unanimous. The situation of the village, although this was only a secondary consideration with Mr. Bruce, was such as peculiarly concorded with his feelings and desires. Placed in a sequestered hollow, through which the Ayr led his stream, winding pleasantly, covered with hills, which rose abruptly on every side, giving root to the beech, the oak, and the birch, which interwove their varied robes in Nature's taste, the little village seemed to be the very home of pensive goodness and holy meditation. These things urged him to

accept the call. Above all, that he might be like his Saviour, continually engaged in his heavenly Father's work, instructing the ignorant, and training immortal spirits for heaven, he gladly complied with the invitation, and was, accordingly, settled among them.

Soon after this settlement, he married Miss Eliza Inglis, the daughter of a gentleman who lived in the neighbourhood of Mr. Bruce's father. This marriage was the result of a long-nourished affection, founded on like tastes and like desires. As they had spent their childhood and youth near one another, they became early acquainted, and early attached to each other. Miss Ingliss, as she grew up, added to a handsome person, and an engaging countenance, the prudence and industry of domestic management, as well as some of those more liberal acquirements, fitted to render her a proper companion for a person of learning and taste. But what had attached Mr. Bruce to her, and what was still the charm that bound his heart closer and closer to her's, was the natural tenderness of her soul, and the meek loveliness of her piety. It was this holy kind-heartedness, this simplicity of nature, added to the humility of the Christian, that threw enchantment into her look, and made her the more beloved, the more she was known.

Such was the young lady, whom, in her twenty-fourth year, Mr. Bruce made the partner of his life. Her good report had reached the village before her, and she was received with joy. The meekness and innocence of her countenance was a passport into the hearts of all with whom she conversed; and the young as well as the old, the rich as well as the poor, applauded Mr. Bruce's prudent choice; and, no doubt, conscious as he was of this world's vanity, he pictured to himself a long perspective of the purest and sweetest of earthly felicity. And, indeed, if youth and health, the comforts of plenty, wedded affection, mutual and fondly cherished, founded on the best of motives, and strengthened and tempered by the influences of religion, together with the esteem and love of neighbours, and peace with ourself and our Maker, could warrant any man to hope for much and long-lasting happiness under the sun, surely Mr. Bruce might well entertain this hope.

In the pulpit, Mr. Bruce was truly the messenger of God. He knew the dignity of his office, and its awful responsibility; and, regardless of the face of man, with an earnestness which was of the heart, and with a voice, and look, and gesture, which suited themselves at all times to his subject, he made known the momentous commandments with which his

master had entrusted him, and enforced the practice of them. Although he was by no means remiss in setting before his flock the terrors of God's wrath, which shall awfully fall on the finally impenitent, his natural mildness of disposition rather led him to enlarge on the eternal love of God, manifested in the scheme of redemption; and to allure his people from the evil of their ways, by painting the beauties of holiness, bringing home to their minds the joy of peace with God, and pointing their eye away to the rewards of immortality. He rather drew his flock after him, as with the suasive of irresistible melody, than drove them into the strait path, by the frownings of offended justice, and the threatenings of coming vengeance.

The abstract doctrines of Christianity he did not leave untaught; but he urged incessantly the practice of heart-felt godliness, faith in Jesus Christ, love to God, and charity to man. He never thought of wasting time, and defrauding his hearers, by heaping together numberless meanings for one passage of scripture, or proving what no one ever doubted, or in endeavouring to bring to the level of human capacity those truths of revelation which Infinity alone can fully understand, and which we are rather commanded to believe than comprehend. He did not so much give rea-

son after reason, to prove why God had a right to enjoin this or that duty, because he knew that few doubted this right, as he set himself to persuade his flock to the doing of it. What is practical in Christianity, he exhorted his people to practise ; what is subject of credence merely, he believed, and taught others the reasonableness of believing it, and its influence on the heart and life ; and instead of bewildering himself, and producing doubt and darkness in the minds of his auditors, by entering boldly, like many divines, on the explanation of what is, in itself, incomprehensible, he stood still, and believed, and adored, and took from it a lesson of humility.

But what, in his public ministrations, drew every ear into attention, and, through the blessing of God, produced such effects on the heart, was not more the soundness of his doctrines, than the earnestness of his persuasions. His was not the cold-hearted address of formality, which suits so ill a servant of the ever-earnest Jesus. He seemed to know the worth of an immortal soul, and the value of eternal happiness ; and he pleaded for God and truth, —for man's welfare here and hereafter, as one would plead for the life of an only son. He taught, he warned, he rebuked, he comforted, with his whole heart ; and was not ashamed, that, like his great Master, the tears

of love and holy sorrow should be sometimes seen weeping down his cheek.

His daily manners suited his character in the pulpit. He was grave, decorous, and affable; dignified without loftiness, and familiar without meanness. He disgusted not the old by levity, nor terrified the young by austerity. Regarding himself as the spiritual father of his flock, and naturally kind, he made the interest of all his own. The child, as well as the man of grey hairs, found in him a cheerful friend and a pleasant instructor. Mr. Bruce spent much of his time in visiting from house to house; a duty enjoined by the Bible, which the ministers of the seventeenth century seem to have recognized, or at least practised, better than those of the nineteenth. Although his learning and cultivated manners made him noways disagreeable to the higher circles, and his duty sometimes called him to mingle with them, yet you would not always have seen him in the train of the wealthy, or seated by the table of luxury. He went about comforting the broken-hearted, infusing the balm of heavenly comfort into the wounded soul, and administering here and there, out of his little income, to the wants of the needy. He entered into the hut of widowed loneliness, and took his station by the bed of poverty in distress. The dying saint saw him enter

his chamber, and caught brighter views of the land beyond the grave from his conversation, and felt his faith increase in the earnestness of his prayers. Nor did he pass by the house where the wicked man lay on his bed of death ; but drew near his couch, and laboured with admonition, with prayer, with entreaty, to turn the sinner's eye to the cross of Christ, and save his soul from death. His character was, indeed, a model which his parishioners might have imitated with as much safety as obeyed the doctrines which he taught. He never thought of preaching humility, and yet walking in the stately steps of pride ; of recommending purity of heart, and yet indulging in the pleasures of sense ; and of eulogising and enforcing charity, and yet shutting his own ear to the cry of want.

While Mr. Bruce was thus engaged, feeding his flock, and endearing himself to them by his constant vigilance for their welfare, he enjoyed the utmost domestic peace and happiness. Mrs. Bruce's prudent management saved him from all trouble with household affairs. His stipend was small ; but she regulated her expenses accordingly. His manse, like many of the clergymen's houses in those days, was when he came to it, a very inconvenient and dull-looking building ; and had been suffered, besides, to fall into sad disre-

pair by the former incumbent, who had lived a single life, and, although peculiarly careful of his charge, had minded little about the comforts of his own house. The rain found its way plentifully through the ragged roof: the windows had, in many instances, exchanged their glass panes for boards, or something still less befitting, and were nearly darkened by the honeysuckle and rose-trees, which had been left to spread at will. To the walls, too, clambered the dock and the nettle; and the little plot, which gently sloped from the door to the river, was so overgrown with brushwood and weeds of every description, that the passage to the stream, in that direction, was almost shut up. The inside of the house was in no better a state. The cornice and plaster, in many places, had fallen from the walls: the floor was so decayed, as to endanger the fall of those who walked on it; and in the closets and bed-rooms spiders and other vermin had long taken up their abode.

As Mr. Bruce was generally beloved, the heritors, of their own accord, fell about repairing his house; and, under Mrs. Bruce's care, every thing about the manse soon assumed a livelier and more handsome appearance. The vermin were driven from their settlements, the windows filled with glass, and every thing within assorted with taste and elegance. The

improvement was not less conspicuous without. The little plot before the house was cleaned of its brambles and weeds, and assumed the smoothness of a bowling-green: the dock and nettle were uprooted; and the rose and honeysuckle, although preserved with care, were now taught to bend their branches in subordination to taste and usefulness. The broad stone, which lay immediately before the front door, and which had been hid under a thick coat of dirt, was clean and washed; and, indeed, all without looked so cheerful, orderly, and comfortable, as well bespoke the peace, and concord, and happiness, that dwelt within. So inviting the honest dwelling looked, that the traveller would not have passed it, without wishing to see its inhabitants; and the weary wanderer would have approached the door, in confidence of a kind welcome to nourishment and repose.

Mr. Bruce, as we have observed, as he had no need, gave himself no trouble about household affairs. His hours of leisure, which were indeed but few, were therefore spent in some innocent amusement. At these times, Mrs. Bruce was always ready to attend him. Her conversation, cheerful and varied, never failed to refresh his mind when it had been exhausted by study, and to restore it to tranquillity when it had been disturbed by any unpleas-

ing occurrence. Mr. Bruce was very fond of the simple songs of his country ; and although his wife's voice was not surprisingly fine, or her management of it very tasteful, her singing would have pleased any one who admired simplicity and feeling. But her husband was delighted : for he gazed on her with eyes of the tenderest affection while she sung to him the sweet melodies of Scotland. Sometimes they read together in some useful and entertaining book,—sometimes they walked by the banks of the Ayr, enjoying the loveliness of nature, and giving audience to the song of the thrush and the blackbird, that from the birch or hawthorn joined their minstrelsy to the mellow pipe of the wind and the purling voice of the stream.

To all these enjoyments were added, first a son, and afterwards a daughter ; the one, Andrew, as every body said, the very image of his father ; the other, Mary, no less the likeness of her mother. Eager to instruct all, Mr. Bruce was doubly so with regard to his own children. He observed with a father's and a Christian's eye the opening of their infant faculties, and, at an early hour, shed upon them the light of truth ; and spared no pains to warm their young and tender hearts with love to God and religion. He taught them betimes the way to heaven, setting their faces

thitherward: and it pleased God to bless his teaching, and render it effectual. He taught them love to one another and to their fellow-creatures: and he turned the attention of their minds to those pleasing and sublime ideas which the objects of nature are fitted to produce.

Andrew, who seemed to resemble his father in his mental as well as corporeal parts, was early designed for the ministry. His education was, therefore, taken chiefly under the father's eye; while Mary learned the more gentle and delicate accomplishments, befitting her character, from her mother: and never had parents more comfort in instructing and watching over their offspring. They loved their parents, and did every thing to please them: they loved each other, feared God, and delighted in obeying his will. They increased daily in knowledge and stature, growing up like well-watered plants which the Lord hath blessed. The rose of health bloomed on their cheeks, and the sacred spirit of religion looked already from their eyes.

Religion! thou art happiness. Thou infusest the calm of heaven into the bosom of man, and pourest into his heart the sweetness of celestial enjoyment. Thou hast, indeed, special rewards to give in the land of glory. There thou openest the arms of everlasting

felicity to receive all thy followers at last into the fulness of its embrace: there thou securest them a place by the font of original life. But thou art even here infinitely superior to every other thing in the purity and sweetness of thy enjoyments. Thou art thyself fair as the light of God; and thou stampest on all the pleasures of thy sons the imagery of heaven, and minglest them with the relishes of immortality. Woe unto him that seeketh his happiness apart from thee! He shall be miserably disappointed.

CHAPTER II.

Unpractised he to fawn, or to seek for power
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour ;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched, than to rise.
To them his heart, his love, his griefs, were given,
But all his serious thoughts had vent in heaven.
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

FOURTEEN years had passed over this happy family, when the Restoration threatened the overthrow of the Scottish Church. Charles, advised by his English and Irish ministers Clarendon and Ormond, and latterly by Lauderdale, secretary for Scotland, introduced the episcopal form of worship into Scotland. Patronage was renewed ; and the clergy were required to procure a presentation from their patrons, and collation from their bishops,—to acknowledge their authority, and the spiritual supremacy of the king. The clergy in the northern districts complied without hesitation ; but their more pious and zealous brethren in the west, however willing they might be to submit to and support the civil authority

of the king, rejected his spiritual supremacy, refused submission to the episcopalian judicatories, and preferred rather to suffer the extremity of persecution, than to sacrifice what they deemed the truth and their duty to God. The people were no less averse from this encroachment on their religious privileges, and resolved to imitate their pastors, whose engaging familiarity, and sanctity of manners, had gained them the esteem and love of their flocks.

But if they had determined to suffer rather than renounce the covenant and their beloved presbytery, the bishops, who had now got all power in Scotland into their hands, determined no less the destruction of both. Burnet, Archbishop of Glasgow, and the apostate Sharpe, Primate of St. Andrews, with a cruelty little becoming mitred heads, prepared to carry this into effect. Ambulatory courts were established, on the principles of the Inquisition, in which the bishops were the judges of those whom they wished to destroy. No regard was had to remonstrance, or entreaty, or even to evidence. To these courts the military were subordinate, and instructed to carry their resolutions, which were often formed in the midst of riot and drunkenness, into execution. By this procedure, three hundred and fifty clergymen were ejected from

their livings in the severity of winter, and driven, with their families, to seek shelter among the peasants. The most ignorant and vicious of their northern brethren, who scrupled at no compliance, were thrust, by the strong hand of power, into their places. The ignorance and shameful lives of these apostates from the covenant, who were now metamorphosed into curates, disgusted the people on whom they had been forced. Their doctrines had none of that heavenly relish which suited the taste of those who had been formerly taught by the best and most affectionate of men. Their churches were deserted; and the people went into the mountains in search of that water of life which no longer flowed from the pulpits.

But this was only the beginning of their trials. Their pastors were soon forbidden to preach even in the fields, or to approach within twenty miles of their former charges; and all the people, as well as their pastors, who were not prepared to abjure their dearest rights, and to submit to the most galling and iniquitous civil and religious despotism, were denounced as traitors, and doomed to capital punishment. To admit any one who refused compliance into shelter,—to favour his escape, or not to assist in apprehending him,—subjected the person so convicted to the same

punishment. To this, military persecution succeeded. They were both the judges and the executioners. The very forms of justice were now wholly abandoned. Gentlemen, and peasants, and ministers, were driven out to wander among the morasses and mountains of the country,—were crowded into jails, sent into exile and slavery,—and multitudes were daily writhing in the torture, or perishing on the gibbet. Rapes, robberies, and every species of outrage, were committed by the soldiers with impunity.—The west of Scotland was red with the blood of its own inhabitants, shed by their own countrymen. The spirits of darkness seemed to have entered into the bosoms of the persecutors, and to actuate all their doings. They appeared to delight in cruelty, and in shedding the blood of the innocent. But the glorious sufferers, relying on the goodness of their cause, and hoping in the promises of God, opposed sanctity of life to licentiousness and riot: the spiritual weapons of truth to the swords of their enemies; patient endurance, to fatigue, and want, and torture; and calm resignation to the most ignominious deaths. And, truly, they suffered not or bled in vain. God at last, gave them the victory over all their enemies, and through them secured to us the religious privileges we this day enjoy. From this short sketch of

the times, which we thought necessary, to explain what shall afterwards occur, we return to that family which we left so happy.

Among those clergymen who bravely refused compliance with the iniquitous orders of government was Mr. Bruce. Although naturally mild, an uncommon lover of good order, and ready, at all times, to impress on his flock the duty and submission to all the lawful commands of the civil authorities, he could not think for a moment of violating his conscience, and of teaching his people to violate theirs, by forsaking what he deemed his duty to his heavenly Master. But there was only one alternative.—Either he must comply with the sinful and tyrannical requirements of the bishops, in whose hands the civil power was, or relinquish his pastoral charge, and quit his house and his living. Mr. Bruce was not a man to hesitate whether to seek the praise of men or the praise of God. On the last Sabbath on which it was permitted him to enter his pulpit, he thus took farewell of his dear flock.—

“You know, my dear friends,” said he, “what orders I have received from the bishops, who possess, for the time, the civil as well as the ecclesiastical authority. I am required to acknowledge the king as supreme head of the church; to submit to the diocesan

jurisdiction of the bishops ; to be re-ordained, and converted into a curate ; and to introduce the episcopal mode of worship into this church. In a word, I am to renounce presbytery ; preach, not as the Bible and my conscience direct me, but according to the wishes of a drunken and licentious court, and the dictates of a self-interested and domineering priesthood. And all this I am enjoined to do, or leave you, my house, and my living.

“ You cannot but know that I have determined on this last. I have not so learned my duty, as not to be able to sacrifice a little of this world’s comfort for conscience sake : and I would rather that my tongue should be for ever dumb, than that it should utter one word from this sacred place, merely to please men in power, and secure my own worldly gratification. I can part with the comforts of a home ; but how can I part with you, my dear friends ? We have lived together in the bonds of love. Every one of you is endeared to me by some particular kindness given or received. I have watched over the childhood of many of you, and now see you advancing in the knowledge of religion as you grow up to manhood. Others of you I have seen growing grey with years ; and I have endeavoured to smooth your way, and stay your steps down the slope of time. All of you I have cared

for,—all of you I have set my heart upon,—all of you have been to me as fathers or sons, as brothers or sisters. How can I part with you, my beloved flock? How can I leave you like sheep without a shepherd, and like sheep in the midst of ravening wolves? O God!" he exclaimed, and the people rose up as if by enchantment; "O God! who seest my heart, thou knowest what love I bear to this people: thou knowest how dear their souls are to me. O hear my cry! keep them from the evil of the world, from the snares which are laid for their feet; and if they should never hear the word of life from my lips again; if thou hast, in thy wise providence, wandering and weeping prepared for them, O Father! so watch over their souls, that I may meet them all at last by the right hand of their Saviour and my Saviour, of their God and my God. Father in heaven, into thy hands we commit our immortal spirits!"

When he had thus spoken, he sat down in the pulpit, and wept bitterly. Nor did he weep alone. The man of grey hairs wept, and the child sobbed by his side. And when they looked to the holy man, whose sorrow was all for them,—and when they turned their eyes to the seat, where his wife sat, bathed in tears, and her children, Andrew and Mary,

weeping aloud, and looking up to their father, —and when they thought, that they were to be driven out from their happy home, to wander in poverty,—again their tears flowed, and again they looked and wept.

Mr. Bruce was the first to recover some degree of composure. He begged his sorrowing audience not to give themselves up to vain lamentations; but rather to be thankful for the comfortable days they had spent together: to be putting their hope and their confidence in God; and to be preparing for the sufferings to which it was likely they would soon be exposed. In surveying the aspect of the times, he said, he had no doubt that the entire destruction of the presbyterian church was meditated; and a severe persecution, he had every reason to believe, was about to commence, in which their faith and their patience would be put to a severe trial. He advised them to be as inoffensive as possible to the civil powers, and to give prompt and cordial obedience to all their lawful commands; but exhorted them rather to suffer, than renounce the covenant, or make the smallest compliance in violation of their own consciences,—assuring them, at the same time, if they suffered now, they would rejoice hereafter. God would remember every sigh, and treasure up all their tears in his bottle. Their

patient endurance would tire out the arm of persecution. They would thus leave the blessings of religious liberty to their posterity; and if they themselves suffered to the death, they would be rewarded in heaven with a crown of life.

After this valedictory admonition, and encouragement, having recommended his flock again to the care of Heaven, he descended from the pulpit, amidst the weepings of his congregation; and when he had, with difficulty, withdrawn himself from them, he retired with his wife and children, to his house.

In the pulpit, Mr. Bruce had carefully avoided making any allusion to his own family. His feelings of sorrow, on their account, were of that deep and sacred kind, which we rather wish to shut up in the sanctuary of our own bosoms, than trust to the sympathy of the most confiding friendship. How could he see her, who had been long the companion of his life, endeared to him by every tie that can draw kindred souls into the closest fellowship, —her who had been ever used to the comforts of plenty,—driven from a home which she had made so comfortable, exposed to fatigue, to houseless wandering, and, perhaps, to want itself? How could he see his dear children, whom she had nursed so tenderly, and in whom resided his dearest earthly hopes, turn-

ed out, unable, as they were, to provide for themselves, on the sympathies of the world? He knew, indeed, that as long as he and his family were permitted to wander among his flock, they would be in no danger of want: but it was easy to read, from the face of the times, that even this would soon be denied them; and he already saw his family, in the forward eye of imagination, suffering under all the evils of insult and beggary.

On this subject he had not dared hitherto to enter, even to Mrs. Bruce. She observed it, and was well aware of the cause; and, anxious to relieve his feelings, on the Sabbath evening, while they sat in their snug parlour, gazing in silent dejection on their children, she thus began the conversation.—

“Do not be so sorrowful on our account, dear James,” she said. “I have shared in all your enjoyments, and I can suffer with you too; and so can these children. We may have many hardships to encounter; but we will have the approbation of our own minds: we will have the protection of that God in whom we have always trusted; and we know that he will not suffer any thing effectually to hurt us. We will have your love, my dear James; and we shall still be happy in sharing your trials, and soothing your cares.”

“Dearest Eliza,” said Mr. Bruce, “you are

indeed right. God will be our protector: why should we hesitate to cast ourselves upon his care? I could have easily made up my mind to this trial, but for you and these children. But why should I cast one lingering look on these comforts, which my Master bids me leave? He can protect you as well as me. Under his guidance we are safe. To-morrow we quit this house, which is to be occupied by another; and let us quit it without a murmur. What is the threatening or indulgence of this world to us? What are its joys or its pains? To do our duty to God, our Creator and Redeemer, to love, to honour, and to obey him,—this is sufficient for us. He will see that no evil befall us."

Here Mr. Bruce paused for a little, and then proceeded thus.—

"But let us act with prudence, my dear Eliza. Might it not be proper for you and the children to go and live with your friends at Lanark for the present? You will then have a settled home; and I am sure you will be kindly treated. For my own part, I am resolved to continue among my flock, and to take every opportunity of serving their spiritual interests."

"No, no," said Mrs. Bruce; "we will not leave you. I am determined to suffer with

you. Nothing but death shall part me from you."

"But these children," said Mr. Bruce; "think of them, dear Eliza."

"They are stout and healthy," replied Mrs. Bruce; "and you shall see how cheerfully they will submit to every thing, rather than part with you. Will you leave your father, Andrew? Will you, Mary?"

"No, no," they both exclaimed; and, weeping, clasping their hands about their father's neck, alarmed to hear their mother speak of their leaving him.

Andrew was at this time in his thirteenth year, a fine smart-looking boy; stout at his age, his hair black and bushy, and his eye full, dark, and penetrating. Of his talents we have already spoken. They were of a high order; and, under his father's assiduous culture, he had already made considerable progress in learning. Indeed, his acquirements of every kind were beyond his years. His father was his only companion, as well as instructor; so that his attention had thus been turned, at all times, to something useful. His susceptible mind had rapidly imbibed his father's ideas, and, in fact, had already stored up most of his knowledge. In piety, in the love of learning, in the amiableness of his disposition, Andrew

resembled his father ; but his mind gave indications of more boldness and originality. Indeed, there already appeared in him a decision of character, a steady adherence to his resolutions and a firm perseverance in the pursuit of whatever caught his attention, which, in union with his religious spirit, promised a life of the highest usefulness.

Mary, who was now in her eleventh year, with cheeks fair and rosy, a fine soft blue eye, and a profusion of golden ringlets flowing on her shoulders, had all the light-hearted gaiety, and innocent loveliness, which girls, properly educated, generally have at that age. Impressed thus early with the sacredness of religion, its purity seemed to beam from her eye. Her love to her relations was in proportion to her tenderness of heart. To please her mother, her father, and her brother, to hear them say she had done well, made her happy. A fairer and a sweeter plant hath nature nowhere : and, in the retirement of the secluded manse, she looked like one of those flowers which the traveller may sometimes meet in the desert, so lovely, that he cannot feel in his heart to pull it, and yet knows not how to leave it behind.

Mr. Bruce, perceiving it was needless to say any thing more about his family leaving him, turned their attention, for a considerable time,

to those truths of the Christian religion which are best fitted to prepare us for bearing changes and trials with fortitude and resignation. And then the family, after joining, as usual, in the worship of God, withdrew to repose.

CHAPTER III.

He stablishes the strong, restores the weak,
Reclaims the wanderer, binds the broken heart,
And, armed himself in panoply complete
Of heavenly temper, furnishes with arms
Bright as his own, and trains by every rule
Of holy discipline, to glorious war,
The sacramental host of God's elect!

COWPER.

EARLY on the Monday morning, Mr. Bruce and his family arose; and, having committed their way to God, prepared to leave their house. The furniture was dispersed among the neighbours, except a few articles necessary for their comfort, which were sent to Braeside, a farm-house, situated in a romantic glen, about four miles from the village, whither Mr. Bruce had chosen to retire. Every thing was soon put in order for their departure.

And now the venerable pastor, with Andrew and Mary, holding each other by the hand, before him, and his wife by his side, slowly and silently left the manse. The two youngsters tript on cheerfully, happy enough that they were going with their parents.

Mrs. Bruce could not be very sad when her husband was by her side ; and the minister had prepared himself too well for this event, to shew much uneasiness. Yet neither he nor his wife could help dropping a tear as they passed the church, and entered the street of the little village, through which their road lay. But the grief of the villagers was excessive. They saw their spiritual guide, their comforter, their adviser, their friend, in the coldness and severity of a winter morning, with his wife and children, driven from his comfortable dwelling, and about to leave them. Would he assemble them no more on the Sabbath, to refresh their souls with the water of life ? Would they see him no more going from door to door through the village, relieving the poor, comforting the sick, and instructing all ? What hardships would these children, and that amiable woman, who, although by no means unhealthy, appeared to them so delicate, have probably to endure ! And was his pulpit to be filled, and his house and living seized, by some time-serving, cold-hearted stranger ?

Full of these sorrowful thoughts, every inhabitant of the village, both old and young crowded about Mr. Bruce and his family. So anxious was every one to be near their beloved minister, that they eagerly pressed for-

ward, and often compelled him to stop. He conjured them to leave him : but it was not till they had accompanied him more than a mile out of the village, that he could prevail on them to think of parting with him. Here he shook hands with each of them ; exhorted them to avoid all evil ; and lifted up his voice and blessed them, while they stood drowned in tears.

Now Mr. Bruce and his family, with a few who had determined to accompany him, set forward to Braeside, while the villagers and peasants returned to their homes, sorrowing in heart, and determined rather to suffer all, than make any compliance to an ecclesiastical government, which had begun so harshly. Such were many of the people, and such many of their pastors, whom the unwise politicians of those times thought to force into their measures by the violence of their persecution.

Mr. Hill, the farmer of Braeside, a worthy old bachelor, had rendered his house as comfortable as he possibly could for the reception of the new-comers ; and, with what articles they brought along with them, and with Mrs. Bruce's ready hand, under which every thing about a house seemed at once to take its proper place, they found themselves, although not very well lodged, yet as well as they had expected. The house, however, like most of the

farm-houses in those days, had only two apartments, a kitchen and a spence, as the room was called. The room Mr. Hill gave them up entirely, and the kitchen was common to him and them. Mr. Bruce had been deprived of his stipend due for the preceding year. It had been always small. He was by nature, as well as principle, generous and charitable, and had, therefore, saved no money. It was evident that he must now depend for his subsistence on the free-will offerings of his people; and in these they were not backward. Although Mr. Hill was able and willing enough to support the family for some time, this he was not permitted to do. Scarcely a day passed but some of Mr. Bruce's flock arrived at Braeside, with what they could spare for their pastor (for such they still considered him) and his family. They had thus a plentiful supply of all the necessaries of life. The education of Andrew and Mary went on as usual. Mr. Bruce preached in the houses of the peasants, or the open fields, on Sundays. Mrs. Bruce was kinder than ever to her husband, and almost as cheerful. Andrew and Mary were healthy and content; and, indeed, while they were permitted to remain at Braeside, they had not much to complain of.

Meantime, the violence of persecution every day increased. The ejected clergy were for-

bidden to preach even in the fields: the people, under the severest penalties, were forbidden to shelter them, or even to give them a morsel of bread. People of all ranks and conditions in life, who would not comply with the tyranny of the times, were driven from their houses, and were every day perishing by the hand of the executioner.

The curates, who had been thrust into the livings of the West, were the most active in informing against the covenanters. The zeal and austere morals of the former pastors were a continual reproach on the vicious habits and indolent dispositions of many of those prophets of Baal, as they were, not unfitly, called; and they wished to have that example, which they were unwilling to imitate, out of their sight.

Mr. Macduff, the curate who had been put into Mr. Bruce's place, was a Highlander, and really understood the English language, as well as the Scotch, so ill, that the peasants among whom he was settled, had they been willing to hear him, could have understood little of what he said. He was a robust, huntsman-looking young fellow, as ignorant of books, and all sorts of learning, as he was indecorous in character. He hunted, fowled, drank with the officers who were stationed in the village, and, in fact, did almost every thing

but what was becoming a clergyman. The parishioners regarded him with horror, and fled from his presence as they would have done from a beast of prey. In no place in Scotland were the curates well attended; but Macduff's church was entirely deserted. Neither threats nor entreaties could induce as many to collect on a Sabbath as to give the appearance of an audience. And, what has been, perhaps, seldom attempted in any other place, soldiers went every Sabbath morning, through the village, and, with bayonets on their guns, compelled a half score or dozen of the inhabitants into the church, where they sat, with countenances of disgust and horror, while the unsacerdotal curate went most indecorously through the cold and formal service of the day. Mr. Macduff had, however, abundance of that pride which is founded in ignorance: was naturally cruel: devoted to the wicked government, because he could expect only to be countenanced by such: obsequious to every mandate of the bishops, because from them he held his living; and, withal, possessed of an unbounded hatred to the covenanters, because he knew, if they prevailed, he would soon be displaced. These qualifications rendered him fit enough for the purposes for which his superiors had chiefly designed

him. They were, to harass and destroy the presbyterians.

To assist the curates in gathering information of the resorts and conventicles of the covenanters, spies were numerous employed. Sometimes they mingled with the people, professing themselves to be their zealous friends: sometimes they went through in the character of travelling-merchants; and sometimes they assumed the garb of shepherds, that they might thus conceal their true character, and therefore be admitted more freely into the designs of the covenanters. Sharpe had multitudes of these in his pay, scattered over the country. And it is not surprising that they brought in abundance of information, when we consider that many of them—and those the vilest and most worthless of men—were paid in proportion to the number of accusations they preferred. These spies, as long as the covenanters were brought to any thing like trial, were always witnesses at hand, ready to swear any thing against them.

Two of these wretches, in the pay of Sharpe, were entertained by Mr. Macduff. Every day they traversed, in one character or other, the surrounding country, and always returned with abundance of information. All was believed, or, at least, pretended to be believed, that they reported; and the soldiers,

with them for guides, were sent forth, to plunder, to apprehend, to torture, or to kill, all whom those scoundrels accused of presbyterianism, which in those days was termed sedition.

Mr. Bruce and his family shared in the increasing calamities of the times. After residing a twelvemonth at Braeside, they were compelled to betake themselves to a wandering life. Now sheltered in some barn: now in some shepherd's hut; and now exposed, without cover, to all sorts of weather. The minister, especially, and his son, who almost always accompanied him, were often compelled to hide themselves in the caves and wild glens of the country. The place whither they most frequently resorted was a cave on the banks of the Ayr, about five miles above the village. It had been formed in the precipitous banks by the hands of men, as a hiding-place in the former troublous times of Scotland, and was roomy enough for admitting five or six persons. The entrance to this retreat was by rude and difficult steps, cut out of the stone; and over its mouth, concealing it from the view, hung the straggling branches of the birch and hazel, that had struck their roots into the seams of the freestone rock. Two or three rude seats, some straw and blankets, made up the furniture of the cave. Here Mr.

Bruce and Andrew, and, indeed, Mrs. Bruce and Mary too, often concealed themselves; and hither, in the darkness of the night, did the peasants of the surrounding country come with food for their worthy pastor and his family, and to receive, in return, instruction, advice, and comfort.

This Mr. Bruce gave them with all the prudence of a wise man, and all the earnestness of a serious Christian. He exhorted them to have all their trust in God; to bear up, with becoming cheerfulness, against the severe trials to which they were exposed. He called them to remember how much Christ had suffered when he was in the world, and with what calmness and resignation he endured it all. He warned them to beware of attempting any thing against the government; well knowing, however much he might despise the exploded doctrine of non-resistance, that the covenanters, deprived as they were of the gentlemen of their party, who were mostly in prison, could make no head against their oppressors, supported by a strong military force. He counselled them to oppose patience and hope to the swords of their persecutors; assuring them, that God would at length interfere in their behalf. And, above all, he comforted and sustained the minds of the poor, hunted, houseless peasantry, by often directing their

hopes to the rewards of immortality. Nor did he destroy the effect of his teaching by his own example. The following conversation, which happened one night in the forlorn cave, will shew how bravely the Persecuted Family bore their lot.

The night to which we have alluded was in the end of autumn. The minister, with his wife and children, were seated in the cave. A few embers burned on the floor, and half-lighted the rude habitation,—the Ayr was heard murmuring down his pebbled bed,—the wind whistled in the mouth of the cave, blowing in the fallen leaf, that rustled about the floor,—and the lightning flashed, at intervals, its momentary gleam into the solitary abode.

“Do you remember,” said Mary to her brother, “how fresh and beautiful these leaves were in summer?” lifting one that the wind rustled through the dwelling. “You remember how we watched them as they spread, and shaded the mouth of the cave?”

“They were very beautiful,” said Andrew, “and kept the wind out of the cave. But their season is past, and we will see them no more.”

“And what should that remind you of?” said Mrs. Bruce. “Should it not remind you of the transitory nature of all earthly things?”

We all do fade as a leaf; we are cut down, and wither as the grass. But the leaf hangs on the twig till autumn; and falls not till it is dried and withered with age. We, my dear children, may be cut off in the midst of our days. From disease we are never secure. But we may have soon to die by the hand of violence. Are you prepared, my dear children, to suffer all for Christ? Do you repine that you have been driven from your home, to seek shelter in such a place as this, for his sake?"

"I am as happy here," said Andrew, "as when we lived at the village. My father and you have taught me to regard my duty to God as the end of my being; and I am resolved, trusting in his grace, to suffer the utmost, rather than violate it. I know he will give me strength to do what he may have appointed me."

"Yes," said Mary, who was no stranger to the Bible, "His grace will be sufficient for us. I know what he says, 'The Lord is nigh to all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He also will hear their cry and save them.'"

"Yes," said Mrs. Bruce, while her husband shed a tear of joy, to hear his children talk thus; "yes, if you put no trust in yourselves, if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, he

will give you resolution and strength to suffer all for his sake. 'Whatsoever ye ask in my name,' says that Redeemer, who hath all power in heaven and in earth, 'Whatsoever ye ask in my name, you shall receive it.'"

"Happy are all those who trust in God," said Mr. Bruce, taking up the conversation, while he threw a glance of unspeakable satisfaction on his family. "Happy are all they, whatever be their external circumstances, whose God is the Lord. We have, it is true, been driven from the comforts of this world's property; but we have, therefore, less to seduce us from the path of holiness. We are exposed to trials; but, through his blessing, they will prepare us the sooner for the enjoyment of his immediate presence. We are exposed to the winds of night; but our souls take shelter under the wings of the Most High. Our enemies are strong, and exceedingly mad against us, but He who is for us, is stronger than they who are against us. Those lightnings that flash athwart the night are the lightnings of God: they say unto him, Here we are; and, at his bidding, can lay the pride of the wicked in the dust. As his power is omnipotent to protect you, my dear ones, so is his love infinite. It passeth all knowledge. We are lost in the contemplation of his astonishing love, manifested in our redemption

through his Son. He hath given his well-beloved Son for us, vile and miserable sinners ; and surely he will allow nothing to hurt us. What, then, should we not rather do, than forsake our duty ? Severer sufferings may be yet awaiting us, my dear ones. But let us always lay the grasp of our dependence on God : let us have our eye on the promised land, the dwelling of life and immortality ; and let us suffer without a murmur. O, my dear ones, in this trying time, may we all so believe, and so do, that we may find ourselves approved when men shall be finally judged. If any thing should occur which may separate us, let us direct our steps to heaven, when we shall meet, to part no more. Our church is now driven to the wilderness. The blood of her people flows on the scaffold : their groanings are heard in the desert. But God hath not forsaken her : she shall yet shout for joy, and clap her hands for gladness of heart. We may be gone, my dear ones, ere the day of her mourning end ; but, by suffering cheerfully, we shall have done our part : we shall have our reward : and, when our church takes her sorrowful harp from the willow, and tunes it to the melody of joy in the peaceful temple our memories shall not be forgotten."

When Mr. Bruce had thus spoken, he knelt down with his family in the cave, and be-

sought for them the blessing, even life that shall never end. And then you might have heard the psalm of praise mingling its holy melody with the blast of night.

Still, Religion, thou art happiness!—Thou hast, indeed, trials appointed for thy followers : but thou comest in the strength of God, and leadeest them out through them all. As the darkness of the world thickens around them, thou sheddest a brighter light on the cloudless clime whither they are travelling. As the cup, of which the wickedness of man forces them to drink, comes nearer the bitterness of its dregs, thou pourest more copiously into their souls the sweetness of eternal life. As they have days of severe fatigue and wandering, and nights more wearisome and watchful, thou layest the repose of their souls nearer the bosom of their God. Woe unto him who seeketh his happiness apart from thee ! He shall be miserably disappointed.

CHAPTER IV.

————— Their blood is shed
In confirmation of the noblest claim,—
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free.
Yet few remember them. They lived unknown,
Till persecution dragged them into fame,
And chased them up to heaven. Their ashes flew
—No marble tells us whither.

COWPER.

Four years of suffering had now passed since Mr. Bruce and his family were driven from their comfortable home. But although many of his flock had been thrown into prison, and sent into banishment; had endured the cruelties of torture, or died on the scaffold, and although they had themselves often made the narrowest escape from the vigilance of their fell pursuers, none of them had yet fallen into their hands. The time was not far off, however, when they were to feel more severely the cruelties of persecution.

On a Sabbath evening, in the month of September, Mr. Bruce, with his wife and children, left the cave, to meet some of his flock, in a wild glen in the neighbourhood,

where he was to deliver a sermon. When they arrived at the appointed place, there was about a score assembled;—some of them stood, some seated themselves on the cold turf, while Mr. Bruce took his station by a large stone, on which he rested the Bible, and read, or rather repeated, for the night was dark, the following verses from the twenty-third psalm.—

“The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Even for his own name sake.

Yea, though I walk in death’s dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill:
For thou art with me; and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.”

Then, as it is beautifully expressed by Grathame,—

“———— rose the song, the loud
Acclaim of praise. The wheeling plover ceased
Her plaint; the solitary place was glad;
And, on the distant cairn, the watcher’s ear
Caught, doubtfully at times, the breeze-borne note.”

After this, Mr. Bruce lifted up their fervent prayer to the throne of grace; and then repeated his text, from the same psalm which had been sung, “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear

no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

This consolatory passage he illustrated, by shewing how they, who had the rod and staff of the Almighty to support them, needed fear no evil. This rod and staff, he shewed, were no less than the infinite love, and wisdom, and power of God, engaged in the preservation of the righteous. This truth he illustrated at considerable length, and with more of elegance than was common to the preachers of the time. We shall content ourselves, however, by giving the concluding part of the discourse.

"If, then," said the fervent preacher, "we have the love, and wisdom, and the power of God engaged in our protection, what have we to fear from the cruelties of men, the malignity of evil spirits, or the terrors of death itself? His love fills our hearts with unspeakable delight, and secures us the guidance of his wisdom, and the all-shielding covert of his almighty power. If we had to set our faces to the machinations of this world, under the direction of our own wisdom, we would soon be entangled in its snares, and decoyed into the pit which is dug for our destruction. But to guide us through every footstep of this earthly journey, to guide us through every footstep of the dark pass of death, we have the infinite wisdom of God, which hath all

things present to its eye in the natural and moral world, in heaven, in earth, in time, and in eternity. The most sagacious spirit that contrives our ruin in the darkest gloom of the bottomless pit, is noticed by our God, and those means taken, which can never err in their operation, to defeat its purposes against us. He observes all the plottings of man's wisdom against us; and turns the best-laid schemes of their wickedness to the profit of his people. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed. But he that sitteth in the heavens laughs: the Lord hath them in derision. He casteth the glance of his all-comprehending intelligence through all the varied workings of natural and moral being, the most intricate, the most profound, the most secret; and the wisdom of the wisest agency, that acts not by his guidance, seemeth to him the folly of fools.

“But, however ardent the love of God might be to his children, however provident his wisdom, if there was any being that could resist his power, still he would not be safe. But our Father hath in himself all the resources of infinite might. In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. He hath created all things. The arm of his omnipotence sustains them all. Turn your eyes to the stars, that

look through the breaking of the clouds: the multitude of their host are suspended to the girdle of his strength, and guide all their revolutions to the bidding of his will. He bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guideth Arcturus with his sons. He stilleth the raging of the waves; and the fierceness of the storm lays itself to rest at the whisper of his word. And shall any other of the beings he hath made,—the spirits of darkness, or the worms of this footstool,—stand up in proud rebellion against him, and try to wrest the people whom he loves,—the people for whom he hath given his own Son,—out of his hand? Did Pharaoh's or Sennacherib's host accomplish aught victoriously against his children? Did the powerful and malignant dealings of Satan touch the life of Job? No, my friends. In the estimation of our God, the strength of man,—the stability of man is less than weakness; and the most stout-hearted of the spirits of perdition trembles at the uttering of his voice, and is held fast in the chains of his power. It is this God, my friends, who is our God. It is this all-wise, all-mighty being, who hath sworn by the eternal Godhead, that he who perseveres in well-doing, who fights the good fight of faith, and turns not back, shall sing victory over all his enemies, and shall inherit glory, and honour, and immortality.

"We are persecuted, my friends; we may soon have to lay down our lives. But let us lean on the rod and the staff of our Redeemer; and whatever be the cunning of man's contrivance against us, it shall be turned to our account; and whatever be the shape that death may assume, we shall behold him shorn of his terrors. O, my friends! let us do what the Bible has taught us to be our duty: let us keep our conscience inviolate: and whatever may be appointed for us here, we shall have the welcome of our Father and Redeemer at last into the dwellings of immortality.

When Mr. Bruce had finished his sermon, so well calculated to encourage the minds of his suffering audience, he took occasion to speak shortly of the times, the substance of which we shall record.

It was easy to see, he said, that the presbyterians would yet be persecuted with still greater severity: that their persecutors wished to gratify their ambition and avarice with the spoils of the covenanters; and it was hard to say how far these passions would carry them. It had been the labour, he observed, of the Stuarts, for several reigns, to get into their hands the ecclesiastical supremacy in Scotland. They had hitherto been disappointed, and would, he had no doubt, be so still. "That infatuated race," continued he, "seems

to be hastening its own ruin." And the venerable pastor dropt a tear, as he thought of the incurable folly of that house. The nation, he could see, would tire of oppression, and would most certainly assert its liberties. Oppression would, as usual, destroy itself by its own cruelties. But, for the time, that patience and hope must be their support: that any thing attempted against their oppressors, when they were in no state for it, would only render their condition more intolerable: that ready submission, for the time, to every thing that violated not conscience, and patient endurance of those evils which were measured out to them, were the means which, under the blessing of God, would at length most certainly restore to them and their children the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

Such were this man's sentiments, on whose head the infatuated administration of the time had set a price, as a rebel and a sower of sedition: and such were the sentiments of many of those heroes of the covenant, whom some historians represent as the visionary and fanatic leaders of a visionary and fanatic sect. We do not pretend to say that the sentiments of all the covenanters were as moderate and just as those of Mr. Bruce. Among a great number, there will always be weak and turbulent minds; and, under severe sufferings,

they will be driven to extravagance. The calumniators of the covenanters ought to remember, that none of them became bad subjects till oppression had rendered them desperate ; and that, if some of them latterly adopted not very rational sentiments about civil government, the great body of the presbyterians who suffered at that time approved as little of their notions as their persecutors did.

The little congregation had again joined in a song of praise, and the minister was just about to dismiss them with the blessing, when suddenly they heard the trampling of horses, and, in a moment, saw advancing rapidly towards them, with lighted torches in their hands, a number of dragoons. Not expecting any alarm at such an hour and place, they had neglected to appoint a watch. A little eminence, which the soldiers had been taught by the spies, who acted as their guides, to keep between them and the conventicle, had concealed from them the light of the torches, until the dragoons were almost upon the little assembly. Short as the time was before the soldiers could reach them, they fled into a morass, near to which they fortunately were ; and the softness of the ground prevented the pursuit of the horsemen. But when the commanding officer saw that they were likely to

escape, naturally cruel and blood-thirsty, and chagrined at the loss of his prey, he ordered his men instantly to discharge their carbines after the flight of the poor people : and, without waiting to examine the result of his orders, wheeled, and rode off.

Several of the people were hurt, but Mrs. Bruce received a mortal wound. "I am gone," she said, while her husband caught her in his arms, to keep her from falling. "I am killed. I must leave you. O, my dear husband ! I leave these children to your care. I leave you all to the care of my God !" She threw one look on her son and daughter, clasped her hands convulsively about her husband, and expired in his arms.

Mr. Bruce for sometime held her fondly in his embrace, and stood speechless and motionless. Andrew wept not ; but threw himself on the ground in the depth of silent grief. Mary shrieked, and took hold of the bloody corpse of her mother, while the peasants gathered round, and wept in silence.

It was some time before any one could find self-command enough to speak. Andrew, whose vigorous mind would not permit him to give himself long up to unavailing sorrow, was the first to break the mournful silence.

"Father," he said, "let us now consider

what is best to be done. We cannot stay here."

Mr. Bruce, at these words of his son, recovering himself a little, stretched the bloody corpse on the heath, and lifting up his hands to heaven, in a tone of resignation, said, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

After a short consultation, it was determined to carry the dead body to a neighbouring hut. Assisting in turn to carry the corpse, they took their way, over the broken mosses, to the place agreed on. On their arrival, the first thing was to settle where the body should be interred. Mr. Bruce wished to be present at the interment: but this he could not be, if they buried the remains of his wife in the village church-yard; for he was sure to be apprehended if he appeared so publicly. And yet he thought it was somewhat disrespectful to bury her in the moor.

"It matters not," said Andrew, when he saw his father's hesitation; "it matters not where our bodies rest. There is no distinction of place in the grave. Is it any difference to my mother where we lay her ashes? God will have his eye upon them; and angels will hold the place in honour. For my part, had I my choice, I would rather be laid at last in the solitary glen of the moor, than be en-

tombed amidst the mockery of funeral pomp, and have the marble monument to record my praise."

"You are right, my son," replied his father. "The grave is a bed of rest to the just. Their bodies rest in hope; and it matters not where they lie."

It was now resolved that the remains of Mrs. Bruce should be buried next evening; and the place appointed for laying them to rest was near to where she had been shot.

When they had thus settled, and after joining in prayer with the sorrowing few who had accompanied him to the hut, Mr. Bruce, sad in heart, withdrew to the cave; for the search after him was so vigilant, that he durst not remain a night even in this remote and lonely hut. Mary refused to leave her mother's corpse; and Andrew stayed to watch over and comfort his sister.

Next evening, Mr. Bruce returned to the hut. About twenty peasants had assembled. A rude coffin had been prepared; and, under the covert of night, the mournful procession moved slowly towards the place of interment. The clouds, clothed in the sombre garments of mourning, stood still in the heavens; and here and there, from out their rifted sides, peeped a solitary star, with an eye that seemed to weep as it looked on the wasteful heath,

and glimmered on the sorrowful countenances of the mourners. Sadly down their glens murmured the streams of the wilderness; and the woful voice of the snipe traversing the wide air, the forlorn whistle of the plover, and the melancholy sound of the wind, that now and then rose on the heath, fell on the ear of Mr. Bruce, like the accents of some doleful prophecy, presaging to him and his family the coming of a still more wasteful desolation.

When the procession arrived at the place of interment, which had been chosen near to where Mrs. Bruce had been murdered, a grave was dug, into which the coffin was let down, and the attendants covered it up; while Mr. Bruce and his two children watered with their tears the cold earth, that now hid from their eyes the one who was dearest to their souls. "But there is a joy in grief, when peace dwells in the bosom of the sad." They sorrowed not as those who have no hope. Mr. Bruce wiped the tear of affection from his eye, and thus addressed the peasants, who could not refrain their tears, as they stood around, and looked on the grave.

"Weep not, my dear friends," said the resigned man: "she hath done her part well. She loved her God, and served him; and he hath now taken her to himself. Happy they, who are thus taken from the evils of this

world! Although we have been compelled to do our last office to her under the darkness of night,—although we have erected no marble to record her memory,—she shall be held among the honourable of heaven. Let us too be prepared to lie down in the grave. If we be fitly prepared for this, it matters not when or in what manner we die. The sooner we reach our Father's house the better. But we must fight out our day, like the true soldiers of Jesus Christ. We must not repine that he keeps us long from our home. He knows best when to call us home to rest. Let us, in his strength, fight the good fight of faith. Let us abstain more carefully than ever even from the appearance of evil. Let us devote ourselves wholly to God. Let us, my friends, be prepared to die well, that, when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be destroyed, we may, like all the righteous, have a building with God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

When the minister had thus said, he bade the peasants farewell; and, with Andrew and Mary, returned to the cave.

CHAPTER V.

The clouds of winter gather: fast the leaves,
One after one, fall from the storm-beat tree;
And o'er the humbled face of Nature flap
The wings of Desolation. 'Tis the hour
And power of Darkness. Men of evil life,
Of horrid cruelty, now compass round
The just man's bed, with chains, and swords, and death.

ANON.

IN the meantime, an incident took place in the south of Scotland, which rendered the condition of the covenanters more intolerable. The persecutors in that quarter had laid a heavy fine on a poor old man; and, being unable to pay it, the soldiers bound him, and, regardless of his prayers and tears, were dragging him to prison, when a handful of peasants, who had gathered around, pitying the poor man, and indignant at the cruelty of such a proceeding, set violently upon the soldiers, and rescued the prisoner. Aware that no pardon could be expected for this action, they took arms to defend themselves. Their number, small at first, soon increased to nearly two thousand; and, in the heat of their rage, they determined to march to Edinburgh, to compel

the government to redress their grievances. The wise and the prudent among them saw the impolicy of this attempt, and tried every means to dissuade their friends from their rash purpose. They represented the strength and discipline of the king's forces; and their own want of arms and discipline; and the impossibility of procuring skilful commanders, as the gentlemen of their party in the West were either in confinement or had fled out of the country. They exhorted them rather to disperse, and seek shelter from the cruelty of their oppressors in flight and hiding, than thus, unprepared as they were, to rush on certain destruction. Moreover, they affirmed, that it would be more consistent with the spirit of Christianity, yet to try to procure a mitigation of their sufferings by petition and entreaty.

Nevertheless, the multitude, afraid to lay down those arms they had once taken up, their minds rendered desperate by suffering, and encouraged by some of the less prudent of their pastors, directed their march towards the capital. This was the very point which the persecuting government aimed at. They wished to have some better pretext than they yet had to plunder and ruin the presbyterians. They had often attempted, by their emissaries, to excite some insurrection. This their own cruelty had now produced. And a band,

which, at the most, was never more than two thousand, and which had taken arms without any previous concertment, was magnified, by the reports of the oppressors, into a general and preconcerted rebellion of all the West.

The result of this insurrection is well known. Having reached the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, reduced, by fatigue or fear, to less than half of their former number, and having effected nothing to better their condition, they were returning peaceably home by the Pentland Hills, when they were pursued and set upon by Dalziel, at that time commander of the king's forces in Scotland. They fought for some time with more spirit than could have been expected from men in their forlorn situation; but a party of soldiers, from another quarter, coming behind them, they were thrown into disorder, and put to flight. Fifty were killed on the spot, (where a very handsome monument has since been erected to their memory;) some fell in the pursuit; and a considerable number were taken prisoners. These were treated without mercy. Ten of them were executed on the same scaffold, and their heads and hands sent to Lanark, where, in passing, they had renewed the covenant. Besides these, many were sent into the west country, and executed before their own doors.

The persecutors had now got, as we have

already mentioned, the pretext they wanted; and they hesitated not to proceed to the most wanton and most inhuman cruelties. Dalziel and Drummond, who were now the commanders of the military in the West, added the ferocity of the Muscovites (in which service they had for some time been) to the cool and inflexible cruelty which characterised the persecutors in general. Dragoons were stationed in every village: and even the private men had power to shoot, without any form of trial, all who refused to take the test to government. In no place were the poor scattered members of Scotland's Church safe from the vigilant search of their enemies. The ejected clergymen, especially, were pursued with unremitting diligence; and, among these, none were hunted with greater eagerness than Mr. Bruce.

The curate, Mr. Macduff, who had succeeded to his place, as he disliked all the covenants, so he hated Mr. Bruce with a perfect hatred. He considered this worthy man, whom he knew to be still lurking about the parish, as the chief cause of preventing the people in that quarter from complying with the established form of worship. The villagers, too, were sometimes bold enough to contrast, even to his face, his character with that of their former minister. These things were

sufficient to irritate an ignorant and cruel being, such as Mr. Macduff was, to implacable resentment against Mr. Bruce; and he determined to have him cut off.—Night and day, the two spies, whom the curate still entertained, were in search of him; and their search was the more diligent, as government had not only offered a considerable reward for his apprehension, but Mr. Macduff had promised them a handsome sum himself, if they would bring him certain intelligence how this good man might be taken.

Mr. Bruce, although he seldom left the bounds of his former charge, had still, however, eluded their search. He was so esteemed and beloved by the peasants among whom he wandered, that they would have cheerfully risked their own lives to procure the escape or concealment of their pastor. And what was very surprising, such was the faithful secrecy of the inhabitants of the place, to whom alone it was known, that although Mr. Bruce had, for several years, made the cave the place of his frequent resort, it had never been discovered by his enemies. An occurrence at length took place, through which the persecutors hoped to secure the apprehension of Mr. Bruce.

Andrew had one afternoon left his father and Mary in the cave, to amuse himself, as he

frequently did, with the conversation of a shepherd who kept his flocks hard by. Scarcely, however, was he half a mile away from the cave, when a party of soldiers, with Macduff, came suddenly upon him. They had been out, we believe, chiefly, that day, for the purpose of killing wild-fowl ; but, at the same time, they required every one they met to take the test,—an oath by which the party swearing renounced the covenant, owned the king as supreme head of the church, and tendered submission to the then existing ecclesiastical establishment. Andrew, without hesitation, refused to comply. According to the laws, or rather to the lawfulness of the times, this refusal authorized the soldiers to shoot the young man on the spot. But although his dress was that of a peasant, they remarked something so superior and striking in his countenance, as well as in the manner in which he spoke, which immediately led them to the suspicion that he might be the son of some gentleman of rank in disguise, from whom useful discoveries might be elicited, or on whose account a handsome sum of money might be extorted.

Induced by those considerations, they spared his life for the present, and conducted him as a prisoner to the village. On their way thither, they repeatedly endeavoured to learn

his name ; but Andrew, knowing well that if they once knew whose son he was, he should have no chance of escape without discovering his father, was careful to conceal his name. When they reached the village, however, the inhabitants gathered round to see the prisoner : and, perceiving the son of their beloved minister, they assailed the soldiers with the most bitter execrations, exclaiming, that the judgment of heaven would fall upon them ; and crying, at the same time, " Will you murder the son of our dear minister ? You have already murdered his wife, and is your cruelty not yet glutted ? "

When Mr. Macduff heard these words, " The son of our minister," he looked to Dalziel, who was himself of the party, and said, with a smile of grim satisfaction, " We have made good sport to-day. We shall now get on the scent of the old fox."*

Dalziel now asked Andrew if he was the son of the rebel Mr. Bruce ? for so he termed this meek and peaceable servant of Jesus. Andrew replied boldly, " I am the son of Mr. Bruce." This short answer, and the tone and expression of countenance with which it was uttered, convinced Dalziel that they had got a

* The curate's language, which would be ridiculous if introduced as he used it, I have translated into English.

youth to deal with from whom severity would not be likely to elicit much.

They now shut up Andrew in the church, which for some time had been more used as a prison than a place of worship ; and having placed a guard, retired to consult how they might best draw the desired intelligence of Mr. Bruce from his son.

The brutal Macduff was for proceeding immediately to torture ; but Dalziel, who had better observed Andrew's spirit, resolved to try him first by gentle means. Accordingly, he returned to the young man, and addressed him in the following manner :—

“Your refusing to take the test, young man,” said Dalziel, “you know, according to the laws of your country, forfeits your life : and you might be led, without further delay, to execution. But we have no desire to proceed to such an extremity with you. Your appearance has gained you our respect ; and we have a strong wish to mitigate the rigour of the law in your case. But this we are not authorized to do, without some little submission on your part. We shall not require of you, however, to take the test, since it seems to be so unacceptable to you. If you will only tell us how we may find your father, you may have your liberty ; and you need not be afraid of your father's life. He has, indeed,

rendered himself obnoxious to government; but we promise that his life shall be safe. We shall be careful that nothing worse happen him than a short imprisonment."

To these arguments, he added, that if the young man could find it agreeable to make the necessary compliances, and if he liked the military life, he would endeavour to procure him some honourable post. Or, if he rather wished to prepare himself for the church, he would recommend him to those from whom he might expect preferment.

Andrew, distrusting the promises Dalziel had made concerning his father, as much as he despised the offers proposed to himself, looking firmly in the soldier's face, absolutely refused to make any discovery of his father.

"Torture," exclaimed Macduff, who stood by, "will make you reveal what our mercy has failed to do."

"Yes," said Dalziel, "we still promise that your father's life shall not be touched. But if you will not make the discovery we want, we have torture prepared that shall make you speak out. And if you still persist in your refusal, your own life shall pay for your obstinacy. We leave you till to-morrow morning to consider whether you will accept your own liberty, with no serious danger to your father, or expose yourself to torture and

death, which may, perhaps, not preserve him long from our hands." So saying, the inquisitors withdrew, to spend the night in mirth and revelry.

Andrew, who had no doubt that the promises made concerning his father would be broken the moment his persecutors had it in their power, determined, without hesitation, not to say a single word that might lead to his apprehension. Aware, also, that what had been threatened against himself would be most certainly executed, he prepared for meeting it like a man and a Christian.

As it chanced that night, there was no prisoner in the church except Andrew. In and around the church, as it stood at a little distance from the village, all was stillness, save when it was broken by the guard chanting a verse of a song, or cursing the times, which kept them on foot at midnight. The interior of the building was faintly lighted by the moon-beams, that glimmered through the old gothic windows. From the windows Andrew could see the manse, half concealed amidst aged trees. He saw too, the pulpit, where, from his father's lips had often dropt the word of life. He looked to the seat where he used to sit with Mary and his mother: he cast his eye on the manse, where they had lived so happily. But his mind soon hurried from

these objects to what the family had suffered since persecution had driven them from their home. They had wandered on the mountains: they had endured cold, and fatigue, and fasting: at midnight, in the depth of winter, they had been often unsheltered from the severity of the weather. His mother, so tender, so affectionate, had already fallen by the hands of their persecutors, and her ashes lay cold in the loneliness of the moor. His father and sister were at this moment lurking in a forlorn cave, and in bitterness of soul on his account. He himself was a lonely prisoner: to-morrow to feel the agonies of torture, and to be cut down like a tree in the verdure of spring. These were the sorrowful and oppressive thoughts which forced themselves on the mind of the young man.

Andrew, as we have already said, had by nature sufficient of that boldness and fortitude of spirit, which bends not easily beneath misfortune: and the many sufferings and hardships he had endured, had only served to call forth and strengthen the natural firmness of his mind: for although trying circumstances may depress and overwhelm the weak and the timid, they never fail to summon forth the energies and heighten the courage of a vigorous spirit.

But Andrew trusted not to the bravery of

human strength. He set himself not, like the distressed hero of romance, to call up the natural fortitude of his soul, and to prepare to meet all the evils that were gathering around him on the strength of man-created might. He had been taught, that the strength of man is weakness, his wisdom folly, and all the resolutions of his natural bravery, fear and trembling at the approach of death. And he turned himself to the throne of that God whom he had always served, knowing he had sufficient help to give in every time of need ; and, in the fervour of confiding prayer, sought the protection of his power, which no being can resist ; the guidance of his wisdom, which never errs ; and the comforts of his free grace, which can never be exhausted. He had seen the wickedness and deceitfulness of his own heart : he had been made acquainted with the strictness and purity of God's law ; and he thought not of preparing to meet his God in the uprightness of his own character. But he looked with a humble and believing eye to the cross of Christ ; and on the atonement which he has made he placed all his hopes of justification and acceptance with God. Verily, he put no trust in an arm of flesh ; but he took unto him the whole armour of God ; his loins girt about with truth ; having on the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of

faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. While the afflictions of this world were thickening around him, and the terrors of death before his face, he had the peace of God dwelling in his heart, the hope of eternal life brightening in heavenly vision; and he could sing, in prison, and in the loneliness of midnight, The Lord is on my side; I will not fear what man can do unto me. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. He felt that, strong in the all-sufficiency of God, nothing could seduce him from his duty; none of the powers of wickedness could wound his soul. Verily, the Christian's weapons,

“—————from the armoury of God,
Are given him tempered so.”

While Andrew was engaged with such thoughts as these, his father and sister, in the solitude of their cave, were deeply afflicted on his account. The shepherd, to meet whom Andrew had left them, observed him apprehended, and carried the tidings to his father. Mary wept for her brother, as if he had been already dead; and Mr. Bruce feared the worst. He knew, and he was proud at the thought, that Andrew would not renounce his religion. He was well aware, also, that no

mercy from the persecutors was to be expected for his son. Those into whose hands he had fallen, he could easily foresee, would leave no cruelty unexercised against the son of one who was so hated by them, and whose life they had so eagerly sought. The distressed father thus looked upon the death of his son as almost certain. And if ever a father had reason to love a son, or be grieved at the intimation of his untimely death, that father was Mr. Bruce.

Andrew was an only son. From his childhood, till the present time, when he was in his nineteenth year, he had been his constant companion. He had watched with the tenderest care the developement of his faculties; turned their energies into the proper channel; and he had seen his care rewarded, by the rapid progress his son had made in the acquirement of knowledge. His talents, the acquisitions he had already made, his love of learning, and his devotedness to religion, warranted the highest hopes of his future usefulness and respectability in the world.

This was enough to render Andrew peculiarly dear to his father. But he had more than this to draw his son nearer to his heart. Andrew had been his companion in suffering: and the calm and uncomplaining manner in which he had endured the severest hardships,

had not only taught his mother and sister to bear their afflictions with patience, but even Mr. Bruce had frequently learnt courage and constancy from his son. Those who have suffered much together, have had opportunities of remarking one another's qualities, and of endearing themselves to each other by numberless offices of kindness, which can never have occurred to those who have passed all their days in prosperity. These opportunities had been too often afforded to the minister and his family. Andrew had gradually become the second hope in which they relied. In all his wanderings, he had scarcely ever left his father's side. He had watched with him, at cold midnight, on the side of the mountains, and in the glen of the desert: he had fled with him, from the fell pursuit of the enemy, exposed to the storms and darkness of winter: he had hungered with him, he had mourned with him, he had endured every hardship with him: and, in all, he had been his father's comforter, and had shewed him the most ardent filial affection. It was this son whom Mr. Bruce was now, in all likelihood, to see taken from him by the merciless hand of persecution, in the very spring of his days. And we need not wonder, if he found it hard, in this instance, to submit with

resignation to the unsearchable appointment of Heaven.

But, if the trial was severe, he had the best comfort which a parent can have, when he sees a beloved child about to be wrested from him by the hand of death. He had every reason, however, to believe, that whatever his enemies might accomplish against the life of his son, his soul would be received into the bosom of his God.

Now consoling himself and his daughter with those sure and certain consolations, derived from that trust and confidence in God, which the holy scriptures point out as the duty of every Christian, under the most severe afflictions,—now turning to the throne of grace in prayer for his son,—and again giving way to all the depth and bitterness of paternal sorrow,—he spent the night in the gloomy cave, hoping, sometimes, that the morrow's light would bring him an account of his son's escape; and yet fearing oftener, it would announce his death.

CHAPTER VI.

“———— suffering for Truth’s sake,
Is fortitude to highest victory.
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life.”

MILTON.

NEXT morning, Dalziel and Macduff entered the church; and the former instantly asked Andrew, if he had come to a resolution about what had been proposed last night.

“My duty was so plain,” said Andrew, “that it required no deliberation. I am prepared to die.”

“But you are, perhaps, not prepared for torture,” said Macduff, with a grin of fiend-like malignity, pointing to a thumbkin, which one of the spies, whom we formerly mentioned, held in his hand, by the curate’s side. “That will make you speak out.”

Andrew glanced an eye of scorn on the curate, looked without emotion at the instrument of torture, and remained silent.

Dalziel then asked him, if he would not send some one to his father, to persuade him

to deliver himself up to them, again repeating the promise of safety to his father's life.

"Thrust your sword through my body," said Andrew ; "but think not to extract from my lips one word, by all the tortures which you can inflict, that may lead to the discovery of my father. My only fear is, that he may hear of my danger, and deliver up himself."

"Try that on your thumb, then," said Daziel, ordering the spy, at the same time, to apply the instrument of torture, while the dragoons, that kept guard, held the young man, to prevent resistance.

The thumbkin was an instrument of exquisite torture : and, on this occasion, it was applied without mercy. For some time Andrew bore the pain it occasioned with a firm and unchanging countenance ; but, as the instrument was screwed closer and closer to his thumb, the colour in his face came and went rapidly, and he writhed himself with the agonizing pain.

Dalziel, seeing it was in vain to expect any discovery, was just about to order the tormentor to desist, when Madcuff prevented him, by saying, "Another twist yet : it may have more virtue in it." The obedient spirit of wickedness turned the screw ; and the thumb of the young man was heard crashing within the instrument. Nature could bear no more.

The blood entirely forsook his face, and he fell down in a swoon.

Fearing that their hopes of yet eliciting something might be disappointed by the immediate death of the sufferer, they hastened to relax the instrument. And, as soon as Andrew had recovered a little, he was again asked whether he would endure the same again, or discover his father.

"You may torture me to death," said he, in a firm and resolute tone ; "but I trust in God, in the Rock of my Salvation ; and you cannot touch my soul. It is covered by the shield of the Almighty. You shall not wring one word from me to endanger my father. The Lord comfort him !

Having tried the torture again, with the same effect, Dalziel, by nature and habit cruel, and enraged that his cruelty had entirely failed in the purposes for which it had been exercised in this instance, ordered the young man to be immediately led forth to execution ; alleging Andrew's refusal to take the test as a ground for this proceeding, although the true reason was his refusal to discover his father. Hanging, as being the most ignominious of deaths, was that appointed for Andrew : and the gibbet, on this occasion, was an old elm-tree near the manse, under which he and Mary had often frolicked in the days of their

childhood. He had just been led to the foot of the tree, and the spy, who was the only one to be found who would undertake the task, was fixing the fatal rope to one of its branches, when the attention of all present was suddenly arrested by the appearance of a young woman, who, screaming wildly, rushed through among the soldiers, and clasped her arms around Andrew's neck.

This was his sister. One of the villagers, who, on the preceding night, had learned the determination of Dalziel with regard to Andrew, before day went to the cave, and informed Mr. Bruce.

"I will go and put myself into their hands," exclaimed Mr. Bruce, as soon as he heard the tidings. "Better that I die than lose my son." And he was making to leave the cave, for this purpose, when Mary laid hold of him, and beseeched him not to go.

"They will murder you both," said she, weeping; "and what will become of me? Rather let me go. I will plead for my brother's life; and surely I will move their compassion."

"No," said her father: "you know them not. The tiger of the desert hath more of compassion than they. I know with what violence they hate me and my family. No, no: nothing but my death will save my son."

But why do I thus tarry here ? Perhaps they lead him out even now to execution."

"Go not my father, I beseech you," said Mary. "Do you think that your death will save Andrew ? O no, my dear father : they will murder you both. I shall be left alone in the world. Be persuaded, my dearest father. Let me go. I am sure they will have pity on us."

Mr. Bruce, considering that it was indeed likely that his delivering himself up would not procure the liberty of his son,—a spirited young man, deeply imbued with principles at enmity with the existing establishments,—and imagining that the tears and entreaties of Mary, which appeared to him so eloquent, might excite some compassion in the hearts of those into whose hands Andrew had fallen ; and taking pity on his daughter, who, he saw, would be left in a state of distraction if he went to give himself up, looked sorrowfully on her, and, wiping a tear from his eye, said,

"Go then, my daughter : But stop,—I may lose you too. Who knows where their cruelty may end ! But, no, no. They will have pity on your youth and your tears. Surely there is not in the form of man aught so cruel that will murder my children. God will protect you. Haste you, my daughter. It is your brother's life that calls you. Haste

to the village ; and the Lord be with you and my son." The distressed father then knelt to wrestle at the throne of grace : while Mary flew with the speed of lightning to the village.

She arrived, as we have seen, just soon enough to have an opportunity of trying what her entreaties could do. The apparatus of death which she noticed at her approach, and her brother standing bound between two soldiers, had so terrified her, that it was some time before she could so recover herself as to be able to speak.

"You have come," said Andrew to her, when she had recovered a little ; "you have come to afflict yourself in vain. My death is determined."

"No, they will not kill you," replied his sister : "these men will not kill you." And then falling on her knees before Dalziel, whom she knew, by his dress, to be of the highest authority, and with tears fast flowing down her face, more lovely in grief, thus addressed him :—

"Have pity on my brother. If you knew how my father and I love him, you would not kill him. I am sure he has never hurt you. Ever since we were driven from the manse, he has lived peaceably in the moors. He has lived with me : and I never saw him do injury to any one. Have pity, sir, on our family. You have already taken our dear mo-

ther from us: and will you now take from me my only brother, and from my father an only son? O, sir, have you no son, that you may know what my father will feel? Have you no brother, dear to you as mine is to me? My dear, dear brother! O, let him go, and I will die in his place!"

These words, when uttered by Mary, were eloquent: and Dalziel felt some movements of humanity within him.

"If your father will put himself into our hands," said he, "we will save the life of your brother."

"Wicked and unfeeling wretch!" exclaimed Andrew, interposing here: "wicked and inhuman wretch! wouldst thou have her save her brother's life at the expense of her father's? Nor would you set me at liberty, though my father were in your hands. Entreat them no more, my dear sister.—Weep not for me. I suffer with joy for the glory that is before me. Leave me, my dear Mary. Go; and if ever you see our father, tell him I died with joy for the liberties and religion of Scotland. Tell him not to regret that he did not deliver himself up. It would have been certain death to him, and would not have saved me. Tell him that I am prouder to lay down my life for him, and for the righteous cause in which Scotland suffers, than if I had been lifted up

to the loftiest pinnacle of human distinction. Dear sister, be you comforted. I go to our mother. I go to the enjoyments of heaven. You and my father will soon follow: and there we shall again dwell together in peace, far beyond the change and turbulence of time."

Dalziel had been, as we have already observed, rather moved by Mary's entreaties; and still, as he saw her turning from her brother's embrace, and again casting herself down before him in the agonies of unspeakable grief, he felt something like the kindliness of compassion hovering about his heart; and he looked to Macduff, with an eye that said, "Might we not have some mercy on this girl?"

The curate, with a look of horrible ferocity, and in a tone of reproach, replied,—“Will you be drawn from your duty by the snivelling of girls? If you pardon rebels for their tears, you will surely be accounted a very merciful man; and the government will certainly sustain the grounds of pardon.”

Dalziel, as if ashamed that he had shewn he yet possessed some little human feeling, without waiting a moment, ordered the executioner to proceed. At this word, Mary shrieked wildly, fainted, and was immediately carried towards the village by some women who had gathered around her on her arrival.

Andrew now mounted the scaffold, which

had been erected beside the old elm. Here he was again asked, if he would not save his life, by complying with the terms formerly offered. The young Christian, strong in the might of God, regarding his tempters with a look of indignation, remained silent. "Prepare then, instantly to die," said Dalziel.

Andrew kneeled down; and, having recommended his soul to the care of his God, he arose, and exclaimed, "Farewell, my father," as if he could have heard him. "Farewell, my sister. The light of the sun, the hopes of earth, farewell! And, O, holy Father, ere I depart, hear my cry. In thy mercy, haste to deliver the suffering people of Scotland. Now, welcome death: and welcome eternity!" When he had thus said, the executioner did as he had been ordered: and the soul of this Christian hero fled away to receive the crown of life.

What suffering was here! What did a father and a sister feel! And how might they have escaped it all? If they had deserted the cause of liberty and religion; if they had submitted tamely to those chains, which a licentious and tyrannical government had forged for them, and which, but for their noble resistance, and that of their fellow-sufferers, might have this day been fastened around our necks, this persecuted family might have

lived in peace in their manse, undisturbed and uninjured by the troubles of the times. But their souls despised the thought. They had the glory of God in their view,—they had the liberty of their country at their heart,—they had the welfare of us, their posterity, before their eyes,—and, without a murmur, they laid down their lives in the righteous cause.

Is there no one that loves to wander about Zion, “and the flowing brooks beneath, that wash her hallowed feet,” and to sing on sacred harps the achievements of the saints? Is there no one warmed with the flame of their devotion, and touched near the heart with their patriotic sufferings, that will twine laurels to their sacred memory into the sweet numbers of immortal melody? Is the theme not soft enough for the refined ear of modern taste, or is it too sacred for the song of the bard? But why should we call for the poet’s lyre? Even now, their praises sound from harps angelic. “What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence come they?” These are they,” respond the choirs of heaven, “these are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his

temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

After the execution, Dalziel and Macduff having stood for a little, glutting their eyes with the effects of their cruelty, or rather, of the government under which they served, Macduff, sadly disappointed at the failure of this attempt to draw Mr. Bruce into his hands, said to Dalziel, "Might we not try what torture would elicit from the daughter? She might be less obstinate; or the father, moved by her sufferings, might deliver himself up to us?"

"Inhuman man," replied Dalziel, touched with some compunctious visitings of nature, "wouldst thou lay thy hand on the distracted girl? No. I will not permit it. Let us find the father as we may. But the daughter shall not be touched."

Macduff, being thus reproved by one who was noted for his inflexible rigour towards the covenanters, ignorant, savage, crocodile-like as he was, seemed to feel a slight movement of shame; and, without resuming the

subject, said to Dalziel, "Let us go and dispatch the prisoners whom the soldiers brought in this morning."

The corpse of the martyred youth was left hanging upon the tree till evening, when some of the villagers ventured to take it down; and, having dug a grave beneath the shade of the elm, laid the remains of the son of their minister in the narrow house.

CHAPTER VII.

ONE grand and peculiarly excellent characteristic of the Christian religion is, that its resources are always in proportion to the wants of its true professors. If the wickedness and cruelty of men gather about them with a more frowning aspect, their Redeemer looks upon them with a kinder countenance. If the calamities and sufferings of life embattle themselves thicker and thicker around them, the objects on which they have fixed their hopes, beyond the grave, come into a better light, and fill their souls more abundantly with their heavenly relishes.

The truth of this remark was well illustrated in the conduct of Mr. Bruce. When he received the tidings of his son's death, with the account of the un murmuring and triumphant manner in which he had closed his short life, the resigned father, looking to heaven, said, "My son, thou hast died in a good cause. The name of the Lord be magnified."

Having uttered these words, he turned suddenly to the peasant who had brought the sad

intelligence, and said, "My son is now safe; but where is my daughter? Have they murdered her too?"

"Your daughter," replied the peasant; "is in the village, with the old woman whom she used to be so fond of. She was so overcome by her brother's cruel death, that she remained for some time in a state of insensibility: but she is now recovered somewhat; although they are afraid she is still in a dangerous condition."

"I knew it," said Mr. Bruce; "I knew she would never survive her brother's death. Her heart was too tender. It is broken: it is broken! O, my daughter! must I lose thee too? My two children in one day! "O Father in heaven!" he then exclaimed, "thou knowest what is best for me, and all that is mine. Do with us as seemeth good unto thee." And then addressing himself to the peasant, said, "Can I not see her once ere she depart? I must see her. I will venture into the village under the shadow of night. If I should fall into my enemies' hands, the Lord will deliver my soul."

"You must not venture," said the peasant. "If you fall into their hands, we will all lose a father, who is our instructor and comforter in all our sufferings. Your daughter may

soon be able to meet you in a place where you shall be in no danger."

"Nay," said the affectionate father, "but I must see her to-night. She hath need of comfort. Perhaps she will not see another day."

"Well, well, reverend sir," said the peasant ; "We will do all we can to get you into the village safely. We will let you know when the soldiers have gone to rest. Then will be the safest time for you."

"Do accordingly," replied the minister. "I will approach the village after night-fall, and wait in the hazel glen till you or some of your friends come to me. Go, and be mindful of your appointment."

When Mr. Bruce was left alone, he ventured out to the top of a hill hard by, whence he could espy the grave of his wife, and the smoke rising from the village, where his son had that day been put to death, and where his dear daughter, his only remaining earthly hope, lay on a bed of distress : And, truly, it needed something more than the mere firmness of natural fortitude to sustain his spirit, while he waited in anxious expectation the coming darkness.

Mary to whom we now return, when she lived in the manse in peace, as we formerly remarked, was cheerful as the lark of the

morning, and lovely as the flower on which hath never breathed aught but the purest and gentlest breezes from the chambers of the south. And, till her mother's death, she bore all the sufferings to which the family was subjected with little change of spirit; and often did she cheer their wanderings by the sallies of her innocent mirth. Ever after her mother's death, however, although her father watched over her with an eye of a guardian angel, and her brother tended her with the most vigilant affection, she had lost much of her cheerfulness, and her health had been rather declining. The circumstances in which the family had been placed had rendered her mother peculiarly dear to her; and her tender feelings never fully recovered from the shock they received by the sudden and cruel death of her mother. And now the still more untimely and cruel death of her brother, together with all the affecting circumstances with which it was connected, had entirely overcome her. After she had been carried into the old woman's house, and had recovered from a swoon into which she had fallen when she heard that her brother's death was sure, she exclaimed, for some minutes, "My brother! my dear brother! what will my father do?" and then relapsed into the swoon. During the whole course of the day,

although she had resorted to the treasures of comfort that are laid up for all afflicted Christians, and although the peace which is from above had stilled the tumult of her soul, she fell at intervals into fainting fits ; and as the evening and night approached, they came on oftener, and continued longer. She felt that she was dying ; and she had only one wish she said, unfulfilled,—that was, to see her father. “ But he cannot come here without endangering his life,” she would say ; “ and why should I wish him ? I shall soon see him in heaven. He will not take care of himself when we are gone, and the persecutors will soon get him ; but my father is prepared to die.”

At the approach of night, Mr. Bruce, anxious to see his daughter, drew near the village. He staid in the hazel glen, as agreed on, till about midnight, when the peasant, faithful to his appointment, met him. As it happened, most of the soldiers, who were quartered in the village and its neighbourhood, had been sent the preceding day on a distant excursion, and had not yet returned ; and the few who remained, the peasant assured Mr. Bruce, had all retired to rest.

Mr. Bruce, in coming to the house where his daughter lay, passed the place where his son was buried, and the church which he had

entered with holy joy ; and he saw the manse where he had lived so happily with his family. But these times were past. His Master had called him to severer service. And the worthy pastor, without giving way to the sad reflections which every object about him tended to suggest, hurried on to the hut where his daughter lay.

When he entered the house, he beheld Mary stretched on a humble bed, to all appearance lifeless. "I am too late," he said to the old woman and some of the neighbours, who stood by. "My daughter is gone." "We hope not, sir," replied the old woman. "She has fallen into a swoon ; but she will recover yet."

Mr. Bruce examined his daughter narrowly ; and he could discover that life had not entirely left its seat. Sometimes, however, he could discern nothing but the paleness and stillness of death about his dear child : sometimes a slight quiver moved her lips, and her eye half opened : and he leaned over her and wept, praying that he might yet hear his daughter's voice ere she departed.

After continuing nearly half an hour in this state, she gave a deep sigh, and looked up in her father's face. "Are you there, father ?" she said. "I am now ready to die. They will tell you," continued she, looking to those who stood by ; "they will tell you what my

brother said to me when I saw him last. Haste you, dear father, from this place. They will torture you if they get you. Is it not night? Leave me before the day come. Dear father, I go to my Redeemer: he is all my salvation, and all my desire."

"Dear daughter," he said, grasping her hand, and half embracing her; dear daughter, what can I wish more? The Lord our God take you to himself!"

"Farewell, father," Mary said, "We shall soon meet again."

O, how lovely in that moment did she seem in her father's sight! Her eye, always beautiful, shed, at its sitting, the purity of heaven; and no earthly commotion stirred the composure of her cheek. For a moment she looked on her father, not like the solitary star, which looks by the skirts of the gathering clouds, which are soon to wrap it in darkness, but like the last star of the morning, about to fade away into the light of day. And now her eye closed: she grasped her father's hand convulsively: it loosened its hold: the last quiver forsook her lips; and her gentle soul fled far away beyond the sufferings of time.

"It is done," said Mr. Bruce, still gazing on his daughter: "it is done; persecution hath accomplished its worst against me. But why should I repine? My dear family have

now escaped from the evils to come. This world was not their home. It was the country of their enemies; and blessed be the name of God, that he hath so early taken them away from suffering, to that place which his everlasting love hath prepared for them. I have now less to care for in this vale of tears. Let me now, Holy Father," said he, lifting up his hands to heaven: "let me henceforth have nought but thy glory before me. In thy name and strength let me fight out the Christian warfare.—Make me more and more the comforter and helper of thy people; and if thou shouldst deliver me up to my enemies, give me to die without a murmur in the cause of my country's liberty."

After uttering these words, Mr. Bruce desired that the corpse of his daughter should be interred as privately as possible; and, taking leave of the sorrowful few who had gathered around him, immediately left the village, and returned toward the place of his concealment.

The objects of nature had early made a deep impression on the mind of Mr. Bruce; and his manner of life, spent for the last six years amidst its wildest scenery, had still deepened this impression. Night, as it was the only time in which he could venture safely abroad, had especially engaged his contemplation; and often, in his nocturnal discourses,

did he turn the attention of his audience to the grandeur of that magnificent temple in which they met to worship God.

Notwithstanding the losses he had sustained that day, Mr. Bruce, resigned to the will of God, and having the Christian's peace in his bosom, as he walked towards the cave, could look with his usual relish to the magnificence of the starred canopy, and the shadowy grandeur of nature around. And as he ascended, with a peasant who accompanied him, an eminence near his cave, he made the following reflections,—standing lonely on the hill—with no wife—no child remaining—but standing firm and dignified, like the oak of the mountains after its leaves have been torn away by the violence of the tempest.

“Turn your eye to those stars,” said he to the peasant, “that look forth like angels’ eyes from heaven. How pure and tranquil they seem! None of the storms which agitate this lower world disturb them. They shone on the beings that trode this waste a thousand years ago, and still they shine on us. Do not their serenity and duration seem to write a satire on the tumult and brevity of the life of man? How much of his folly have they seen! how little of his wisdom! How much of his cruelty to his fellow-creatures! how little of his brotherly affection! How many

have they seen going forth, under their holy light, with the dagger of vengeance, to carry into execution the dark plots of wickedness! how few have they noticed crossing the valleys of earth on errands of mercy! How many deluded human beings have they observed bowing down to stocks and stones! how few bending the knee sincerely to the living and true God! Yes, they have seen hundreds of generations bustle away the little hour of their vanity—and they have seen their everlasting destiny sealed: And yet man is still as foolish as if none had ever proved to him that he must die. He grasps at the shadow of earth's happiness, more fleeting than that which the passing cloud casts yonder on the heath. And so eagerly does he run after the spectre, that neither the tears nor the execrations of thousands dying under his feet, nor the sword of eternal wrath which gleams over his head, can stop him in his frenzied pursuit. Sure there is something miserably wrong in the human heart. Surely the true eyes of the human understanding have been, indeed, put out. The shadow that falls from yonder mountain, and hides the vale in gloom, is itself brightness, compared with that cloud that broods on the human mind, and benights all its faculties. So dreadfully dim is mortal vision, that it cannot discern the glory of God

himself, even when he comes to redeem, to forgive, and to save. Oh, when shall that star arise, which led the wise men of old to the manger of Bethlehem, and guide the way of every man to the feet of Jesus ; who, although he created the heavens, and heard the harps of angels sing his glory divine, died, to make us wise unto salvation ? Surely the time will come, for the Lord hath sworn it, yea, he hath sworn it by himself, when the earth shall return to its allegiance, and be cured of its folly."

Here the holy man looked to his companion, whom he had forgotten in his contemplations ; and, casting his eye of faith far into days yet to come, and filled with the blessedness which the promises of God have pledged to the world, exclaimed, " Yes, my friend, we have the God that made all these worlds to support us. We have his promise, that truth shall ultimately prevail. Let us boldly do our duty, that we may be partakers of that joy unspeakable, which shall fill the hearts of the just, when all shall be complete in Christ, and when these stars shall melt away at his second coming."

When Mr. Bruce had withdrawn his mind from these contemplations, he parted from the peasant, and returned to the cave, by wife or child no longer made cheerful.

CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER the loss of his family, Mr. Bruce continued to instruct and comfort his scattered flock with more assiduity and zeal than ever. The sufferings he had endured had given a bolder and firmer tone to his character. The more he saw the devastations of cruelty and tyranny spreading around him, the warmer his heart glowed with the love of liberty, and the blessings which accompany it. The lovely flowers, which, that he might guard and cherish them, had hitherto rendered him more careful of himself, were now gathered into a place of safety. With nought to bind him to earth but an ardent desire to instruct and counsel the presbyterians, so as they might best attain the glorious purposes they had in view, he now ventured forth boldly, and seized with eagerness every opportunity of strengthening and consoling them. Thus employed, for a considerable time, he wandered from place to place, always visiting as often as he durst, the people of his former charge.

But, in proportion as Mr. Bruce became more conspicuous among the persecuted party, the malignity of his enemies, and their exertions to cut him off, increased ; and what they had so long and so eagerly sought was now drawing near.

One Sabbath evening, in the depth of winter, he met, according to previous appointment a few of his own flock, in a remote house, not very far from the place where he had so often concealed himself. There he preached a sermon ; and, as if he had felt some presentiment that this sermon would be his last, he exhorted his hearers, towards the close of his discourse, with extraordinary warmth and energy, to be faithful to the death, to live peaceably, to bear all with patience ; assuring them that God would most certainly plead his own cause, and deliver his servants from oppression. He represented how much Christ had suffered for them, and with what meekness and resignation ;—what blessings they would secure to posterity, and what rewards they would themselves receive, by bearing nobly up against the storm that beat on them so severely. On leaving the little audience, whose hearts had burned, whose eyes had wept, whose faith had increased, and whose purpose to bear all, for the cause in which they had engaged, had been more firmly es-

tablished, while listening to his discourse, he said to them, in a cheerful manner,—“My friends, when we part in these times, we have very little certainty of meeting again. But our best friend, Jesus Christ, goes with us all. He is company enough; and should any thing happen to any of us, when we have no one to give us assistance, he will take care of us.”

When he had thus said, he left the house, fearing that he had been already too long there, as it was not improbable that some notice of the meeting might have reached the persecutors. Both because it was the safest place, and because he meant to spend the remaining part of the Sabbath night in private prayer and supplication to God in behalf of the suffering people, he withdrew, unaccompanied, to the cave, never suspecting that any of his enemies observed him. But there had been a Judas among those who embraced him at parting.

One of those spies, whom we have had occasion to mention before, eager to gain the reward offered to any one who should bring information which might lead to the apprehension of Mr. Bruce, took the following method to compass his design.

With the consent and privacy of Macduff, he entirely forsook his house, lived among

the peasants, and, as he was one who had formerly sworn the covenant, he manifested the deepest contrition for the aid he had given to those who sought the ruin of the covenanters. He gave proof of the greatest zeal in every thing which had for its end their safety,—revealed to them many schemes which were contrived for their destruction,—and shewed always the most sensible alarm lest he should fall into the hands of those he had last deserted. By these artifices, he gained the confidence of those with whom he now associated; and had continued with them more than a month, supporting always the same character, before Mr. Bruce happened to visit his people. The night of which we have spoken was the first time he had ever got into his presence. Mr. Bruce noticed him; but, both from the manner in which he behaved during the meeting, and from the account he had received of him, he entertained no suspicion of his real designs. This man, if he deserve the name, dogged Mr. Bruce, through the darkness of the night, to the cave; and, as soon as he saw him enter, sped to the village, to give information.

It was midnight when he reached the curate's house. And although this monster would not have risen from his bed at that hour to save a soul from death, he instantly got up,

and, with the malignant satisfaction of an evil spirit, when it hath compassed some infernal aim, hastened to inform the few soldiers who were in the village. No time was lost. It was at first resolved to bring Mr. Bruce to the village, and send him thence, to be executed in Edinburgh. But, as the appearance of a Dutch fleet on the north coast of Scotland had at that time, occasioned the withdrawing of most of the troops from the West, they were afraid that the handful they could collect would not be sufficient to repel the peasants, whose ardent attachment to Mr. Bruce, they had every reason to suspect, would excite them to attempt a rescue. Urged by this reason, and determined, at any rate, to make sure of Mr. Bruce's death, Macduff said to the commanding officer, "Go, and shoot the rebel wherever you find him. The king will reward you for it."

The soldiers, about ten in number, set out from the village, conducted by the spy, and led by an officer well fitted to execute a bloody command. As the ground was covered with snow, and the way extremely rugged, they could make no use of their horses, and were therefore obliged to leave them behind. But, although the storm of winter howled around their heads, and the darkness of night brooded on the rough and wayless moors, keeping

by the direction of the spy, not far from the stream up which the cave lay, they urged on, as if they had been going on a message of extraordinary mercy.

About three in the morning they reached the vicinity of the cave. Two or three soldiers were posted on a cragg above it, one or two on the opposite side of the stream, to prevent the possibility of Mr. Bruce escaping, while the others scrambled up the difficult ascent which led to the mouth of the cave. The spirit of the blast of night moaned dolefully among the forlorn cliffs: the Ayr, half fettered in ice, grumbled at their feet; and the leafless trees, by which they supported themselves as they ascended the rock, waving to the wind, seemed to utter curses on the ruffians' heads. Hardened as they were in ruthless deeds, their guilty hearts interpreted every sound they heard as an indication of coming wrath. They trembled like the leaf which the wind passeth over: and, as they stood still involuntary before the abode of the holy man, they heard, issuing from the mouth of the cave, the following words.—“Yea, for Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, Holy Father, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the day of her mercy come. Hast thou forsaken Zion, O Lord? hast thou forgotten the people of thy love?—Our temples

are desolate: the courts of thy holiness are defiled: thy children are scattered on the mountains: they weep and cry in the desert. The harp of their sorrow hangs on the willow, and mourns to the blast of the wilderness: the wastes of nature are watered with their tears: their blood is poured forth, and there is none to pity them! Surely we are a sinful nation; a people laden with iniquity. We have forsaken thee! we have provoked the Holy one of Israel to anger. But, O merciful and Holy One! God of salvation! look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness; and let the bow of thy mercy be seen in the wilderness. Thou wilt not forsake us. I know thy church is graven on the palms of thy hands; her walls are continually before thee; and the point of every weapon that is lifted against her wilt thou at length turn into the soul of him that lifted it. Haste, O God and Father, to deliver us! Turn the hand of oppression from our country, that thy people may dwell in freedom and peace. And while thou seest meet that they should wander on the mountains, and suffer in the cause of their country, O give them patience, and fortitude, and strength. Let them take comfort, that, in all their afflictions, the Captain of their Salvation is afflicted, and that the Angel of thy presence shall

save them. Stretch over them the shield of thine omnipotence: guide the path of their trials by thine all-comprehending wisdom: fill their hearts with thine inexhaustible love: save them, O Lord! Save and support them in death! And, O Father! when the day of thy vengeance arriveth, and the year of restitution to the spoilers of our land doth come, have mercy on those who have had no mercy on us. Soften the hardness of their hearts: open the blindness of their eyes. O cast them not away from thy presence for ever! For who among them shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among them shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

Thus did the holy man, in the darkness of night, in the cave of the cold rock, plead with his God for our church and our country.

The fell assassins still stood before the cave, trembling at the words they had heard, and the holy confidence with which they were uttered. And the most fearless and stout-hearted among them wished the task of murdering this servant of Jesus had fallen to other hands. After a short pause, however, the officer, ashamed to have felt something like humanity moving within him, which he considered as cowardice, suddenly entered the cave, ordering two of his men to follow.

Mr. Bruce, who was kneeling when he en-

tered, arose. A few embers, that burned on the floor of the place, helped to show his appearance. His forehead was bald, and his few remaining locks were grey. His figure, although nothing improved by his half-worn and little-befitting clothes, was elegant ; and the serene and peaceful dignity of his countenance, which changed not at the entrance of the soldiers, was such as might impress the beholder with respect and awe.

"You are come," said he mildly, addressing the officer, "you are come to apprehend me. I am prepared to go with you. You, perhaps, have a better lodging for me than this ; although, as it is, I have been often glad to get to it."

"My orders are," said the officer, "to offer you the test ; and, if you refuse it, to put you to death on the spot."

"Nay, then," said Mr. Bruce, smiling, "is heaven so near ? You are going to send me to better lodgings indeed."

"But will you take the test," said the officer, "and save us the expense of a shot ?"

"God be my witness," said Mr. Bruce, the true fortitude of the Christian strongly marking his countenance as he spoke ; "God be my witness, I will never swear away my allegiance from the King of Kings, who is my Saviour and Master. I will not submit to

that which my conscience condemns. I will not connive at the enslaving of my country."

"Have done," said the officer; "have done."

"I have done," replied Mr. Bruce, with unfaltering voice. And, lifting up his hands, he prayed, and said, "Lord Jesus, forgive my enemies. Lord Jesus, be with the poor people I leave in this wilderness. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, receive my spirit!"

When he had thus spoken, the officer commanded his men to discharge their carabines on Mr. Bruce. The reverend minister glanced a look upon them, and they refused to obey. "Faint-hearted slaves," exclaimed the enraged officer; and, snatching a carabine from the hand of one of the soldiers, discharged its contents into the breast of Mr. Bruce. The martyred saint instantly fell down, and expired while the report of the fatal shot yet echoed among the wild cliffs around. Farewell, good and faithful servant! Thou hast entered into the joy of thy Lord!

"Still, Religion, thou art happiness! The joys which thou pourest into the heart lie not within the reach of any weapon that the hand of man can form. The calm which thou settlest on the soul, the wing of no earthly blast can disturb. The light by which thy children walk is the candle of the Lord, which can never be quenched. Thou plantest a torch for them in the gloom of death's darkness;

and supportest their goings on the rod and the staff of the Almighty. Thou conductest their spirits to the feast of immortality, and layest their bodies down to sleep in peace till the morning of the resurrection. Woe unto him that seeketh his happiness apart from thee! He shall be miserably disappointed.

READER, I have now finished this short account of the PERSECUTED FAMILY. In it I have had occasion to introduce thee to some of the sufferings that were endured, and some of the cruelties that were exercised, by our ancestors of the seventeenth century,—the former, for the sake of religion, and all the dearest rights of men; the latter, to extirpate liberty and leave to posterity the chains of servitude. The sufferings of the family, to which I confined myself, did not lead me to bring into view the most exalted Christian heroism which was in these time manifested; and, unwilling to shock the tender feelings of the heart, I have studiously avoided some of those monstrous cruelties which were then exercised and which, without going out of my way, I might have introduced. Thou hast seen enough, however, kind reader, of the latter, to abhor it; and of the former, to admire it.

I know thou hast praised their patience, and their resignation, and their hope, and their fortitude in death. Thou hast marked their staunch adherence to the dictates of conscience, the ardour of their devotion, and their love of liberty and their country. And while thou sittest in peace, conscious that thou mayest worship thy God as thou thinkest the Bible orders thee, thou perhaps givest them, who suffered so much to secure thee this liberty, the sacred applause due to their exertions. It is right that it should be so.

But I wish thee not to stop here. I wish thee to trust in and to adore the grace of God, which supported them, and gave them victory;—to admire the wonderful resources of that religion which they professed,—how sufficient they are to instruct and advise the Christian, in the devious and difficult paths,—to keep his heart warm in the coldest winter of adversity,—to invigorate him, as he climbs the steepest ascents of virtue,—and to uphold and sustain his soul in the face of the most violent of deaths.

Nor hath the Christian of the present day need only to admire the marvellous sources from which his suffering ancestors drew.—He hath not less need than they to draw for himself. His enemies are more concealed, more mannerly, more deceitful, and, therefore, less

apt to excite his suspicion, and put him on his guard. Persecution labours to force the Christian out of his way, whether he will or not; and, therefore, the spirit of liberty within him encourages him to make a bold resistance. In the days of peace and prosperity, he is assailed by pleasures, which, endeavouring to draw him out of his path, by the sweetness of their song, and the fairness of their promises, excite their suspicion of their design, and are, therefore, often little resisted.

If the persecuted Christian needs more of comfort, of steadfastness in peril, of patience, resignation, and fortitude,—he who lives in peace requires more of watchfulness, of self-denial, and of resistance to temptation. If our wants are, therefore, as numerous, so should our applications be to that inexhaustible source which supplied all theirs, and which will supply all ours, if we approach it with our whole heart.



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